HIGH ADVENTURE

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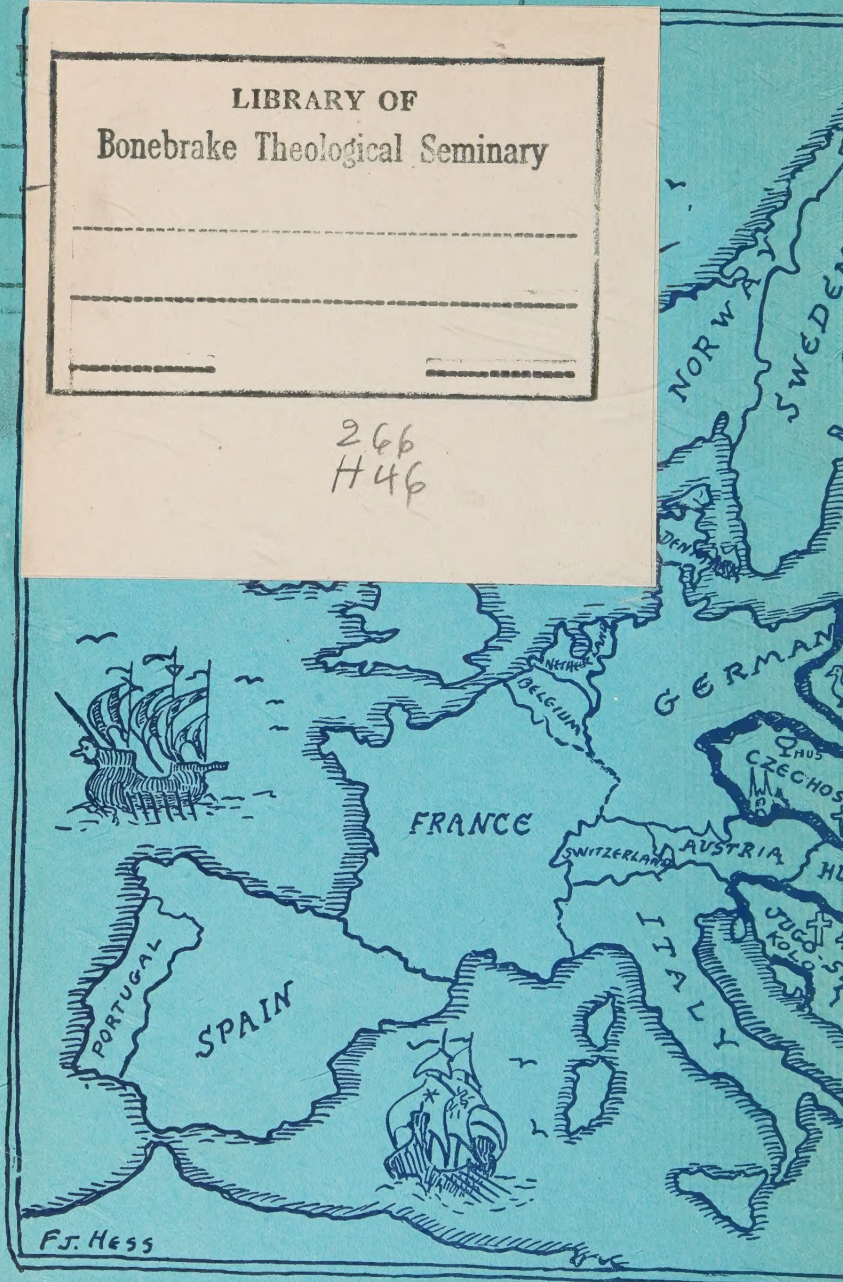

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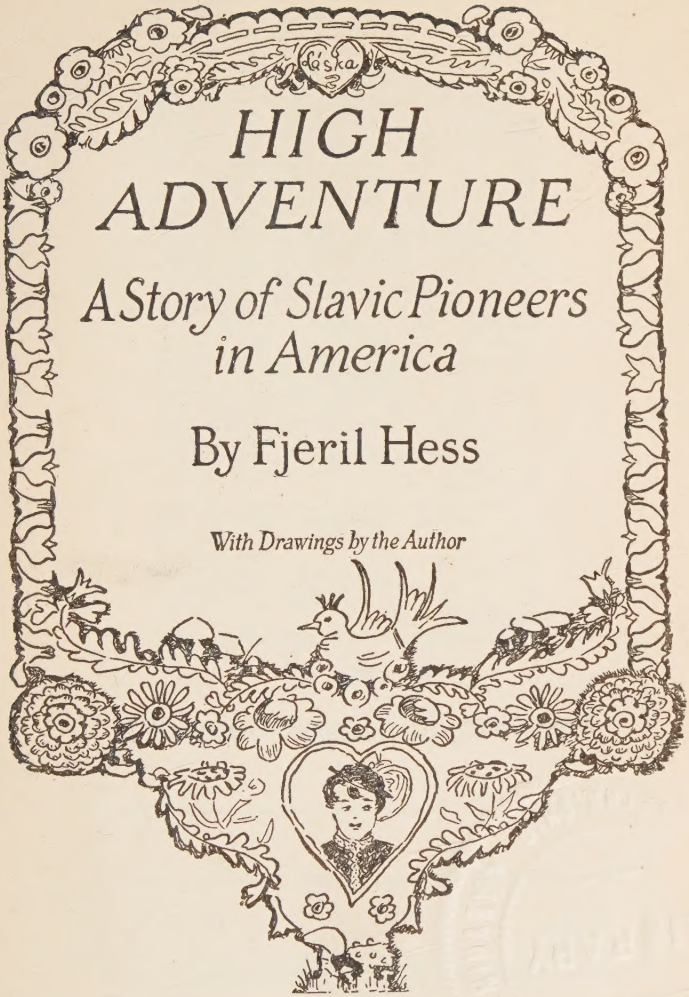

HIGH ADVENTURE

A Story of Slavic Pioneers in America

By Fjeril Hess

With Drawings by the Author

COUNCIL OF WOMEN FOR HOME MISSIONS
and
MISSIONARY EDUCATION MOVEMENT
NEW YORK

Immediately upon her graduation from college in 1917 Miss Fjeril Hess joined the staff of the International Institute of the Young Women's Christian Association and came into close touch through the community work of that organization with immigrants from Slavic countries in several industrial centers in Eastern states. Following the World War she was made a member of the group of Americans that the Y. W. C. A. sent to Czechoslovakia at the request of the new government to make a social and educational survey of Prague.

Upon the completion of the survey, Miss Hess remained in Czechoslovakia for several years as the first student secretary for work among the students of the University of Prague. Since these included large numbers of Jugoslavs, Russians, and Ukrainians, she had unusual opportunities to become acquainted with the life of the various Slavic groups other than the Czechs. She also traveled in Slovakia and Poland. During this period Miss Hess was intimately connected with the planning and building of the famous *Studensky Domov,* the first student center ever erected in Central Europe.

Since her return to this country, Miss Hess has been managing editor of *The Womans Press,* the official magazine of the National Y. W. C. A., and through her writing, singing, and drawing, has been an ambassador at large, interpreting the life of the Slavic newcomers to their American neighbors.

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To
Mary Elizabeth Hess

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FOLLOWING THE WESTERN HORIZON

One who is satiated cannot understand another's hunger.

A Russian proverb

Russian cross-stitch design.

CHAPTER ONE

Following the Western Horizon

I'm on my way to Oregon
With my banjo on my knee.

So sang Jed, a sturdy small boy with a man's courage, as he traveled with the covered wagons of the pioneers out to Oregon. To those of you who have read Emerson Hough's *The Covered Wagon,* or who have seen the motion picture based on this book, Jed is not a stranger. And for those of you who have not seen this really remarkable motion picture, or read the book, hours of rare interest are in store as you follow the adventures of young Jed, a lad of thirteen, who, in 1849, went with his family from New England out to Oregon in a "covered wagon."

A freckle-faced, wiry youngster was Jed, who rode a pony and carried his share of work and responsibility. Around the camp fire of an evening folks would call, "Well, Jed, give us a tune," and

out would come his battered treasure, his banjo, to lead in the singing.

In this vivid story of American frontier history, when Oregon seemed farther away than the seven isles that lie beyond the seven seas, we catch through the youthful Jed a glimpse of what the courage of adventure is. Jed of *The Covered Wagon,* in his tight old-fashioned jacket and long trousers and boots, makes us regret that we were not born in the days when the men of our country were still following the mystery of the western horizon, and when the women and children accepted hardship and danger in order to keep families together.

For us, the iron horses of the railroads and the winged sandals of the telegraph have penetrated that mystery. The plains have been conquered by rail and wire, and the proud warriors that filled Jed's journey with fearful delight are silenced and saddened by civilization.

I have met many "Jeds" grown to old men out West, who still remember the thrilling hardships of pioneer days before automobiles or railroads made travel a far different undertaking from what it was with ox teams. The "prairie schooners" with their billowing canvas and creaking wheels are still occasionally seen, but they look like aged ghosts swaying on toward dim graves, even in the ample spaces of the Western country.

To the boy Jed, hugging his beloved banjo, even though the miles sometimes seemed endless oceans

of wearying dust, and death a fearsome animal skulking behind the greasewood and sage-brush along the road, every new day had its thrills and its adventures. How envious would be the boys back home if they could see him driving his team like any man, or riding his pony like a streak to round up the scattered horses in breaking camp!

Today most of us have to find our adventures in less thrilling fashion. Playing ball in a traffic-harried street when a home run is made at the cost of a broken window-pane or at the risk of being run down by a taxi is adventure of a kind; a picnic in the deep woods beyond the farm is splendid, but there is always the warm fire and the family to return to, and the only danger we run of being scalped is a figurative one—if we fall into the creek and return home wet and too late for supper.

There is the adventure of moving from one town to another if father changes his business. But soon we find that the girl next door dresses and wears her hair just as we do and is as curious as we are. Yet there are lots of interesting things to do in this new neighborhood; in fact, young folks are always finding an adventure every time they turn around. But the point is, in spite of our secret cave in the empty lot or our excursions to the Great Wood, we listen to Jed's banjo and envy his overalled legs astride his pony, bound for Oregon.

A few of the men in that great wagon-train kept moving on all their lives, even after Oregon was reached. But for the most part they settled down and made new homes, built schools and churches, until gradually the pioneer line joined that of "civilization," and the prairie schooner lives now only in a museum. I suspect that Jed grew up with all his freckles and married one of the little sunbonneted girls who had been as heroic in meeting hardship as any grown-up, and that he played his banjo to the admiration of ukulele-twanging grandchildren. For it was a home, land, and independence that Jed's people were seeking, and if they could go singing into the wilderness, all the better. And so we envy Jed of the last century.

But today in the block next to ours there lives a boy who has been a pioneer and who has had as strange and dangerous an experience as Jed. He hasn't freckles and he doesn't "chaw terbaccy," but he plays the guitar and wears as queer a little round hat and tight trousers as ever did our friend of the banjo. At least he did when I first knew him. Now he is as knickerbockered and ordinary as any boy on the block, for his clothes were laughed at, and he didn't like to be called "skinny-pants" even when he could not understand what the words meant. I hope his mother will keep the white woolen embroidered trousers and the gay shirt which he wore when he came to this country. This

boy's name, strangely enough, is Jan, and he could almost be Jed's twin.

But what about Jan's strange and wonderful pioneering? You may think that our town is a queer spot to pioneer in. The truth of the matter is that

Jan's home in the Old Country.

this place which sometimes seems so dull to us is the western horizon which the men of Jan's village have been following for years. Jan himself told me the story of the great adventure of his coming to America, and I should like to tell it to you as nearly as possible in his own words.

"You see, *slečinka,*[1] where I lived in my country

[1] For pronunciation and meaning of foreign words, see Glossary, page 159.

over the great water, it was very quiet in the mountains, and far from the iron roads. All day we worked in our fields or far off in the forests cutting wood for the winter or to sell in the city where the King lived. We were many children and so very hungry that often *Mamička* would say she should have to find a *poliovka* pond that would never run dry of our favorite potato soup. But there was always a big loaf of good brown bread and sometimes, on feast days, a *perníček* for every one of us.

"One day came a *sedliak* from the next village who talked a long time to our father, and we heard him say 'Ameriky' many times. Later, *Otecko* told us that the soldier brother of this *sedliak* had written a letter to him which the schoolmaster had read, —even without his spectacles,—about America and the money that all the Slovaks were making there; the fine big houses they lived in, with lights that came out of a little black button on the wall and water that poured from a silver cock into a white basin. And the city where the soldier lived was greater than ours where lives the King. But only English must one speak, he wrote, and only by English could one come into this America.

"For many days we talked about the letter that had come to our friend in the next village, and the wonder-tale grew until the soldier brother seemed himself a king in a new land where every house had three stories and silver water-cocks.

"Many weeks later, before we children could

know what was happening, *Otecko* went away with the *sedliak* from the next village, and our mother told us, with the tears rolling down her cheeks, that he had gone to America and we must all pray to the good God to bring him safely over the terrible sea to the western country.

"By and by we began to get used to having our father away. Soon the fields were ready to plow again, and even the little children were busy tending the geese all day long. But every Sunday in the church we prayed for a long time to the kind God to watch over *Otecko* and let him find enough big dollars to take us, too, to America.

"The summer and yet another winter passed, and the tears no longer poured down *Mamička's* cheeks as she prayed in the church. But she would pray a whole candle length before the shrine with a look on her face that made me kneel very quietly by her side and watch the candle instead of counting the tulips embroidered on the back of the *starosta's* great-coat. Always I knew then she prayed for our father, that he might be well in America.

"But even many candles could not hold my eyes on the day that the letter came from Father with tickets and money for the great journey to America. The letter with its queer marks and stamps was passed around the whole village, and the precious tickets the priest kept for us till we should start.

"I was then thirteen, *slečinka,* and the eldest. I sometimes felt very old and grown up when I told

the boys of the village about America, and made up tales of the fortune I would find there. They would follow me around all day asking questions, which I proudly never let go unanswered. I told them about the iron horse which would take us first to the King's city for our passports, for my father had written of this among other things strange to us. I had an idea that passports were something like the holy books that lay on the table in the church, a gold-covered treasure that would be fit to carry in a procession on feast days, for did it not cost a small fortune? The priest explained many times to *Mamička* and me the importance of this passport, and indeed if I had died before we started on our journey, I should have feared to enter heaven without the powerful passport.

"In the King's city there was trouble enough that waited for us, and I felt small and young then. I was glad the boys of my village could not see the boasting fellow who now cried each night with homesickness for our dear cottage and fields. It was so strange and unkind in the King's great city. Not even our own language was heard, but German, which *Mamička* could speak a little, for her father had been in the service of a count; but it sounded like a funny babble to us young ones.

"There we slept in the railroad station for fifteen days, waiting for the beautiful passports and the train that would take us to America. It was often very cold, and the littlest ones grew ill from bad

food. But always *Mamička* waited with a fearful sort of patience and told us we must not expect to do great things in a few days' time.

"One night as I lay across a bundle of feather beds, I dreamed that I was in America and that my father was trying to shake me. His face was black with anger and his beard had grown, making him quite ugly. I awoke suddenly and found a terrible looking man crouched over me, trying to reach under me for the little bag which *Mamička* always carried. She carried the precious tickets and the money safe inside her dress, and in the little bag were some trinkets dear to her because they came from our little home—a carved plate which grandmother had given her and some ribbons from her bride's bonnet, a few beautiful Easter eggs for father and some holy pictures. But the man with the black stormy face did not know this; he thought our money was in the little bag. I stayed very quiet for a moment until he raised himself a little over me, and then I lifted one foot in its heavy boot and kicked him square in the stomach and gave an awful cry for help—*'Pomoc!'* It sounded so loud in the big station-room where so many people waited, asleep, for the train to America. The man jumped, first from my blow and then because of my noise, and after giving me an angry look, ran quickly away before the sleeping peasants were awake. I ran after him into the street and tried to point him out to the police who came hurrying up,

but he was well out of sight by that time, and I crawled back to my bundle, cold and frightened. *Mamička* comforted me by saying that the money was quite safe, and the man was probably only hungry. That anyone would try to steal from honest people I had not known before, but I was to learn better as time went on.

"Also this was not the last of the man I had first seen in my dream and whom I had mistaken in the drowse of dreaming for my own dear *Otecko.*

"At length the endless waiting was over, and my mother came one morning to say that the passport had been accomplished. How eagerly we crowded to see it—and how bitter was our disappointment in finding it only a little brown-paper book—no splendid golden covers at all. It went quite easily into the little linen bag with the steamship tickets.

"There were over a hundred of us on the train that would take us on our way to America. It was terribly hot and crowded. No one of us knew just where we were going except that we were bound for America. The little ones would peer out of the dirty windows and say, 'Kdě Ameriky?' And I would tell them over and over that it was a long way yet—at least three more days. Before the next month was up, I also was asking, 'Where is America?' but no one answered me.

"Sometimes in the evening as we waited long in a station for the next train to take us to America,—for we took many trains before we reached the

steamship,—I would unwrap my father's guitar which he had taught me to play a little, and we would sing some of the old Slovak songs. But even though we sang some of them quite gaily, they made our hearts sad, for they spoke of the village, the mountains where we had left the green trees and the falling waters, they made us feel again the cool evening air and the warmth of the tiny fire that we children would always build in the fields. There is an old saying, *slečna,* 'Where there is a Slovak, there is a fire.' But there was none on this endless journey with the iron horse or afterwards on the great ship.

"But the guitar and the songs we sang made for us again those dear things of our village life, and we wondered in a kind of uncomfortable way why we had left them.

"However, it was not all tears and waiting that the iron horses brought us. There were strange new towns and villages, people dressed very differently from any we had seen in our country, queer and delicious cakes that *Mamička* bought us once in the land of the Swiss. We never tired of gazing out of the small windows of the train when we could get to them,—and what boys in our village had ever seen a train!

"Once when we were having the usual weary wait at a small station, a soldier who had been to America three times lifted up my small sister and said, 'Look, *maličká,* there are Americans!' and he

pointed out a beautiful tall lady in a fine cloth dress and a man with black queer spectacles and no mustaches. 'But why do you say they are Americans?' I asked him, unwilling to accept anyone's word about such an important matter. He laughed and said, 'Because the *Američankas* all wear shoes like that, with no heels, and the *Američans* wear black-rimmed spectacles and no mustaches.'

"We stared hard at these people from the country of our dreams and they looked at us and smiled. Then the lady said something to our soldier, and the sound of her words was funnier than what we had heard in the King's city. When she pointed to the black box under her arm and smiled at little sister and me, Marenka hid her face, but I stood up straight and sober, for I knew that the little black box was to make pictures with. The priest's nephew had had one the year before when he visited our village.

"When I asked the soldier Guro if *Otecko* also would have to wear black spectacles and cut off his mustaches, Guro roared with laughter and said it would be a long time before *Otecko* could be an American.

"All that night I wondered why it would take *Otecko* so long to be an American, and I am sometimes not sure that I know even now. He has shown me the papers that say he is an American, and I too am an American—it is written down so on the papers—and even the littlest one, Marenka,

Where there is a Slovak, there is a fire. In the dusk of evening little groups of children will stop on their way home to gather around a tiny bright fire beside the road. Sometimes there are potatoes to roast while they exchange a bit of gossip or tell an old time story; or it may be the wayside shrine tempts some to pray.

but my father always shakes his head and looks keenly at us and says, 'Oh, yes, some day you will be real Americans.' *Slečna,* what can he mean? Surely one does not need the black glasses and the smooth chin to be an American."

Jan became so thoughtful over this problem that it was some time before I heard the rest of his great adventure. But from his mother, who always said she could not have come without Jan's help, I learned of the heartaches and the joys of the rest of the journey.

In France at the busy seaport where they were to take the steamer to America, sickness came to the baby Marenka. Funds were low, and it was only through the kindness of an American who was interested in emigrant pioneers from many countries that a place for her was found in the hospital. The care of the three other children had to be left to Jan, the thirteen-year-old man of the family.

One day while sitting on the wharf watching the ships unload, Jan caught sight of a man talking to another man who wore a uniform and called himself "Interpreter." Jan was sure the first man was the ruffian who had tried to rob them when they had started on their journey, and he decided to keep an eye on him.

As the children left the wharf, Jan noticed that the man began to follow slowly, so, herding his little flock in front of him, he hurried up the narrow rough street. At the first turn he pushed the little

ones into an alleyway and hid them behind an old wagon. Then telling them to keep as quiet as mice, he crept out to reconnoiter. He saw the man come hurriedly up the street, look left and right at the turn, then he heard him swear horribly before he followed the street up into the town. Jan ran back to his small charges, dragged them out from their hiding-place and crept cautiously back to their cheap lodging-house. He was sure that the bearded man still remembered the vicious kick he had given him in the station and was out for vengeance.

By the time the mother returned from the hospital with a smiling Marenka, the children were in a state of complete terror. The husband of the lodging-house keeper was told about the man and assured by Jan that he was a wicked thief. Hadn't he tried to steal the carved plate and the Easter eggs for his father, thinking they were money? Monsieur Lapin, the lodging-house keeper's husband, volubly assured Master Jan in turn that if the man still lived, he, Jacques Lapin, would not rest until he was strung up to the tallest mast of the biggest ship in the harbor. And Jan, listening to the excitable little man, whose black eyes snapped so fiercely, rested easier than he had for the past week.

The next day, Monsieur Lapin informed Monsieur Jan that his troubles were over. *Voila!* The man was already the guest of the town constable, arrested for stealing an emigrant's passport, and

since he, Jacques Lapin, had further informed about his conduct, it was not likely that he would bother husbandless women and defenseless children again! But here the black eyes of Monsieur Lapin grew round and admiring upon being assured that *Otecko* was indeed alive and prospering in America, and his family only momentarily bereft of his presence.

When the day came to gather up the feather beds, the bags of dried mushrooms, and the battered trunk that had once been given *Mamička's* father by his employer, the count, Jan felt as if his heart would leap out from under his clean white shirt, even though he buttoned down his embroidered vest ever so tightly. He, Jan Markovič, was going on that great ship which he had seen unloading mountains of bales and boxes upon the wharf, across the sea to America.

The quiet little village with its peaceful church bell and homely evening noises seemed far away. Jan's guitar was hung carelessly down his back, quite as if it were a bundle of hay. The sight of the busy ship with the shouting men pulling and heaving at ropes and boxes drove the melancholy songs from his heart for a little and set up a trembling in their stead, a breathless expectation that was hard to control.

Jan was quite sure that the huge ship was not afloat. He asked the soldier Guro over and over if it would really not sink with all the bundles

and people on her. Guro laughed another of his big laughs and said that a little two-for-a-crown tub like this would float like a cork.

Just as the deep throat of the steamer bellowed forth its warning for all to go ashore who were

The quiet little village seemed far away.

going ashore, Jan saw Monsieur Lapin leap nimbly up on to a pile of casks on the wharf and look eagerly toward the ship. And there, smiling and nodding at *Mamička*, stood plump Madame Lapin. If one could only speak French in America instead

of the dreaded English! thought Jan, for already he had learned to make himself understood in the short weeks of his stay with the Lapins.

And now the wharf seemed to be moving away from them and Monsieur Lapin hopped up and down, waving his short arms and shouting, "Au revoir, mon enfant, au revoir, au revoir!"

Jan turned away from the ship's rail where he had been so tensely standing and bumped square into the man of the black beard. His heart almost stopped beating for an instant and then began to beat so fast that it seemed to choke him. But the man was talking to one of the sailors and did not notice him. He appeared to be traveling as an emigrant too, for his bundles lay on the deck at his feet. Jan ducked under a crane that had been used in loading the vessel and ran to the other side of the ship where his mother and the other children were sitting with their bundles.

Now began the old game of hide and seek which he had played in the French port. Fearing to worry his mother if he told her his man of the black beard was on their ship, he said nothing, but kept his eyes open. Hundreds of emigrants were crowded into the lower part of the ship, sleeping in tiers of bunks or on the open deck when the nights were warm enough.

As the vessel steamed out into the open sea and land was a tiny speck on the far horizon, Jan wondered when he would see the man again. But

he seemed to have disappeared, and Jan thought that he might be suffering from the strange illness that so many of his companions seemed to have. By and by he too felt queer and found that his narrow dark bunk was more comfortable than it had at first felt. It seemed to him that when the ship was not standing on end, it was lying on its side, or with great bounds it was leaping down into deep holes and scrambling up steep hillsides. Then for two days the poor lad lost track of its queer antics, forgot the man who had so persistently dogged their footsteps, and gave himself up to the sickness which had descended upon all alike.

A few days later Jan awoke one morning feeling fresher than he had for a long time. At first he thought the ship was standing still. All around him people lay either snoring or so quiet that they seemed dead. He climbed wearily down from his high bunk, taking care not to disturb *Mamička,* who lay below him, looking so pale and sad, and made his way to the open air of the deck.

Leaning on the rail, he watched the blue sea slip by under the steady stride of the ship, and thought how good it was to see the sun again and to feel his legs under him. He longed for the old hillside at home where he often had stretched himself out in spring to watch the clouds hurrying by above him. If he shut his eyes, he could fairly see the green fields and hear

the tiny sounds of life on the ground under him —a company of ants struggling along in the short grass carrying an enormous load of food, beetles cracking to each other as they made their lazy

The old hillside at home where the clouds hurried by.

way homeward, the grasshoppers' crisp busyness over nothing at all. He could almost smell the earthy odor of that hillside and feel its springy turf beneath him.

Then, all at once, he felt as if the hill on which he seemed to be dreaming had given way beneath him, for he was drawn swiftly backwards and downwards into the dark. He tried to cry out as he had that night in the quiet station in the King's city, but he could make no sound. An ill-

smelling rag was held tightly over his mouth so that he could not turn his head to see who his rough companions were.

He could hear a man grunting as they climbed down the steep ladder which seemed surely to lead into the sea itself, and thought he recognized the black-bearded man's voice. Then in his own language, Jan heard a hoarse whisper directing the man to put the lad in ahead. "He'll be out of the way here all right." And before he could see either of the men, a door was shut and a bolt was shot.

Jan was used to the dark, for there was no electricity in his village and candles were dear. Also, he had been a leader among the boys at home when fun was abroad, but now, weakened as he was by his illness and lack of food, his situation appeared very desperate indeed.

He tried to believe that Guro or some wag among the older boys was playing a joke on him, but he could not forget the voice that he was sure belonged to the wicked fellow whom Monsieur Lapin had thought was safely in the town jail. If he could only have known the anxiety of that good friend upon hearing that the thief had escaped from the constable and could not be found anywhere in the port town!

But how could he get out of this place and back into the sunlight? No thinking of hillsides now and dreaming talk with insect folk! Where was

he and why? And how was he to get out of wherever he was? Beating upon the door brought no one near, and the dark was so intense that even his young outdoor eyes could not see through it. But he was used to counting the lambs in the dark, and could tell by the feel of each woolly back which sheep it was and whether in good condition. In even such blackness as this he had once felt his way out of the forest—and he would find a way out of here! A small prayer went up to *Ježišek,* the babe in Mary's arms, and then carefully through the blackness Jan felt his way.

It seemed many hours that he climbed over heavy bags of grain and huge wooden cases that had a foreign musty smell. Now and then a rat would scurry from under him, startling his heart into a faster beating. At last he reached a solid wall, and as he felt along its smooth side, there was a touch of cold iron under his fingers.

Meanwhile, the other emigrants had begun to recover from their sickness. Many of them, lounging about the sunny space allotted them on deck, began again to sing softly some of the old songs. Passengers from the upper decks of the steamer, traveling in bored comfort but also just gaining their sea-legs under the mild weather, gazed down curiously upon the adventurers below. One of these gentlemen called down to ask a song from the boy with the guitar, for early in the voyage Jan had been the favorite of the cabin passengers.

Word went around in the steerage for Jan. No one had seen him that day. His guitar lay at the foot of his narrow bunk, and his round black hat swung idly on a peg above. The soldier Guro volunteered to find him and began a search of the emigrant quarters. But no Jan could be found.

The hunt became serious, and an officer was sent to investigate. All the nooks and crannies that a small boy might tuck himself into for a nap were thoroughly looked into until, at length, the officer, with a serious face, went to the Captain to report a missing boy, Jan Markovič, age thirteen, steerage passenger.

About four o'clock that afternoon, as the second engineer bent over a refractory pump in the engine room, he heard a faint scratching sound and then a series of dulled taps. After a moment he decided he must be mistaken. But his ears were keen for unusual noises in that deep room below decks, and when the sound began again, he dropped his work to take a look around.

The young second engineer soon found that the knocking came from beyond a small, unused iron door, high in the wall of the engine room. Try as he might, he could not open the door, for many coats of paint had made it stick fast. He shouted aloud above the racket of the engines at the little door. He thought that he could hear a faint sound, but the knocking stopped.

For a moment the engineer hung on the steep

ladder leading down from the door, wondering if he could have been mistaken. Hearing nothing further, he climbed down, picked up his wrench again, and bent over the broken machine. Then the sound of muffled tapping began again. He straightened up and stood motionless, listening. In another moment he had dropped his tools and was on his way in search of the chief engineer, who called in the ship's carpenter, and together the three men descended to the heat of the engine room. The carpenter was new to the ship and asked to what the door led. The lean old Chief said that it led into one of the lesser storerooms, but it had not been opened in his memory.

After much sweating and straining, the carpenter loosened the bar and gradually pried the door back on its hinges. The men crowding together on the narrow ladder peered into the musty darkness. The second engineer's flashlight threw gold doubloons upon the velvet curtain of darkness and caught up a flash of white by the side of the door against the wall.

"By Jove," the young fellow exclaimed, "it's that little foreign kid who plays the guitar down steerage! The old man had about decided he'd fallen overboard this morning."

The Chief looked thoughtful as he bent over the boy and gently lifted him up from where he lay crumpled on the floor. The white wool of his embroidered trousers was streaked with grease and

grime from his hours of effort in the stuffy dirty room. One sleeve of his homewoven linen shirt was torn from cuff to shoulder, and his bloody hands showed the marks of nails and splinters run into in the dark. He lay in a crumpled heap in the arms of the gray Chief.

"Poor little beggar, how did you get into this mess?"

The second engineer wished to spread the news of Jan's rescue at once, but the Chief advised him to wait and bring the Captain below. The Captain came immediately, and the four men held a consultation over the exhausted boy.

"Looks queer to me, sir," said the Chief. "It's dirty work somewhere, though why this little guitar player should be picked on is beyond me."

The Captain said "Hm!" and rubbed the lowest button of his uniform as he always did when working on a problem. Few things missed his eye, and he believed he had an idea about the strange disappearance and imprisonment of Jan.

Rousing Jan from his stupor, the Chief said, "Young man, my son," and Jan looked up at him with startled, frightened eyes, "you're among friends, sir."

Jan, who had been pestering Guro to teach him English words in order to surprise his father, knew the word "friend" and said solemnly, "*Ano, priatel*—friend." Then, gaining a little confidence, he poured out a stream of strange words.

"If he'd only speak French or German or Spanish, I might pick up a word or two," said the engineer, "but this is funnier than any talk I ever heard. Can't find a single sound, let alone a word, that I could duck my cap to."

But the Captain's mind was working. He asked the second engineer to send for the sailor Havelka to come to his cabin, for he remembered that he came from the same part of the world as this young Slovak boy. Even before the War when Central Europe meant Austria-Hungary and Austrians to the average person, the Captain knew well enough that "Austrian" might cover any number of different tongues and nations.

The second engineer wondered a bit at the Captain's peculiar request, for to him Havelka was a "Portugee or a Greek or sumpin."

Havelka was brought to the Captain's cabin, and he stood before the Captain a bit nervously, although he felt safe enough in regard to his part in stowing Jan away.

"Havelka," began the Captain mildly, "give me the key to storeroom K."

Havelka looked startled for a second and then said that he did not know anything about that key or any other key.

"Well," said the Captain, "bring me the man who has it and be quick about it."

Havelka stammered that he knew of no key to any storeroom, "so help him *Pan Boh.*"

"You'll need the help of *'Pan Boh,'* whom I take it is your Lord and Maker, before you get free of the jacket you've sewed yourself into, my man. Young Markovič might be lying in with the dead rats, except for the help of your *'Pan Boh';* but if he is a just God, he won't be so ready to save your miserable skin. March!"

The Captain shoved the frightened sailor out of the cabin and taking him firmly by the arm led him to the rail that overlooked the lower deck where the steerage passengers were sitting or lying stretched out in the sunshine.

"Is he down there?" demanded Captain Martin. Havelka's arm was held so tightly in the brawny fist of the Captain that he could hardly bear the pain. "Yes," he muttered, "over there behind the boy's mother."

Captain Martin took a keen look at a black-bearded man with cunning eyes who sat a few paces back of a young peasant woman holding a sleeping child. Her face was sad and strained, and her eyes swollen with weeping, for she now reluctantly believed that Jan, her comfort and joy on the long journey and the pride of his father's heart, had disappeared into the wide sea.

More than that, while she sat on the deck with her little family to get some sunshine after the dreary days in the stuffy rooms below, her bundles had been ransacked, and even the precious Easter eggs had been broken into little pieces.

The money and passports were still safely pinned to her blouse, but a dark ugly man had been tormenting her with his attentions the whole of the day, and now she was weary, homesick, and worn with worry and sorrow over Jan.

"H'm," said the Captain for the second time and bluntly marched the sailor back to his cabin, followed by the curious stares of passengers enjoying the first fine day of the voyage.

Two sailors were sent to bring up the unsuspecting man from below. He was so surprised at the appearance of two men before him who took him by the arm and led him up the stairs that he went unprotesting. Without a word, he was led before the Captain.

To make a long story short, the man confessed that he had been told that the young Slovak woman was carrying much money to America from the sale of a farm. Several attempts of his to get hold of it had been frustrated by the vigilance of the boy, so he had determined to get Jan out of the way long enough to accomplish his purpose. The fellow admitted that he had been to America several times before. It was discovered, too, that he made a business of robbing emigrants who were often bewildered and confused and too trusting to offers of assistance from strangers. He had tried to steal a passport on this trip because he was afraid he was being watched at the American port, and he had hoped to enter under

a stolen name. The Captain locked the rascal up until he could be handed over to the authorities on landing, and Jan became a hero in the eyes of his fellow passengers as soon as they heard the melodramatic tale of his imprisonment.

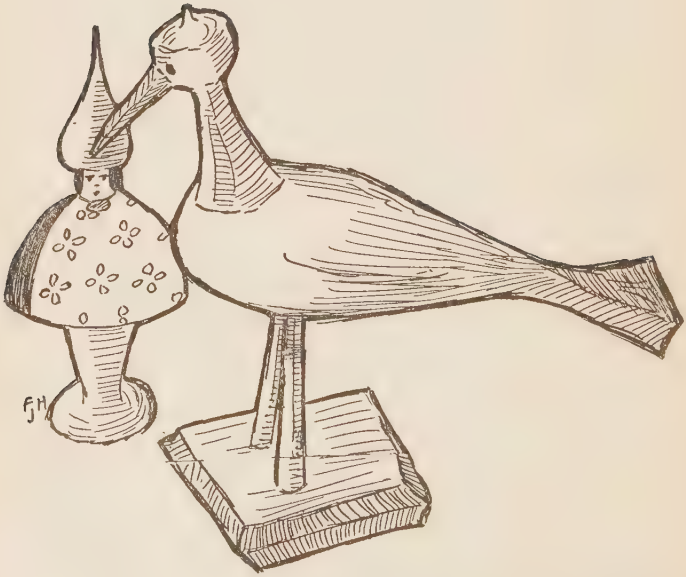
It was a great day for all the little family when the ship steamed into New York with the fears of the journey behind, and ahead the joys of being with father again and the wonders of a new land.

"And so," Jan's mother would sigh softly, "we came here and my Jan is an American. But I," she would laugh shyly, "I am still Slovenka."

In his heart Jan still carries the songs he used to sing in the fields and woods of his homeland; but now he does not sing them as he walks, for amid the noise and bustle of America, how people would indeed stare at a young fellow who broke into song on the street!

Like Jed, who, at the end of the trail of the covered wagon, was probably very busy helping to make a new home in Oregon, Jan has had to work hard to help his family make a home in this country. The trim little house "in the next street" was not waiting for them after their long journey. It has taken years of hard work and saving; there were many disappointments and much unhappiness and loneliness in the new country before Jan and his family even began to feel that they "belonged." They are pioneering just as truly as

Jed and his people pioneered on the far frontiers of Oregon. But some day Jan will take down his guitar and sing to his children the old songs and tell them the story of his high adventure in leaving the little village to cross half the world to a new home.



Jan still cherishes the brightly painted, carved wooden toys of his childhood.

THE SLAVIC FAMILY AT HOME

If I see your eyes, I know you a little.
If I hear your voice, I know you still more.
If I see your actions, I will know you altogether.

A Serbian proverb

The Serbian kolo. (*After Vorkapitch.*)

CHAPTER TWO

The Slavic Family at Home

Who are the Slavs and what part of their family are the Slovaks? It is strange enough that we have known so little of such a great and widespread people, but theirs has been a complicated history, and there are many reasons for our seeming ignorance. Suppose we try to make a map and see for our own satisfaction where Jan and some of his neighbors came from.

Let us take this big square of white paper and draw a line almost diagonally through it starting in the upper right-hand corner.

Then we will put in a few jogs here and there, and the first thing we know we have a rough outline of Europe from the north and west.

We will take a chunk out for the Mediterranean Sea, then we will scoop out a longish, narrowish piece for the Adriatic Sea, which makes the familiar "boot" of Italy, drop a rock, which we shall

call Sicily, for the boot to stub its toe on, and there we have a familiar enough outline.

The World War of 1914-1918 was the cause of an upheaval in the geography business. We suddenly found we could not jog on any longer with England, France, Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and so forth. Enumerating the countries of Europe suddenly became like learning the alphabet backward, which, as you may know, is quite a feat. To those of us in school now such names as Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia are more familiar than they were to our older brothers and sisters.

But let us get on with our map. Where, on old maps, Austria-Hungary used to stand, we discover on modern maps names that have become familiar only recently. In these places on our map let us put in now Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, Poland, and Ukrainia. Up in the right-hand corner we will put in only a very small piece of the great country of Russia.

So, there is the outline of our map. How much can we fill in? What are the people like? And why do we put in only these groups?[1]

We do so because many hundreds of years ago they all came from one great family, and now they have become scattered and have grown away

[1] In the very front of this book is a map that will help you to know a great deal about the homelands and some of the characteristics of the Slavic peoples.

With a few jogs put in here and there, a chunk cut out for the Mediterranean Sea, a longish, narrowish piece scooped out for the Adriatic Sea, leaving the familiar boot of Italy, and the rock of Sicily for Italy to stub her toe—here we have a familiar outline.

from each other. Their family name is *Slav,* and we call all of these groups of people Slavic, even though some are Poles and some are Slovaks and so on. What family do you belong to? To the Teutonic, or the Italic, or some such family group, do you not? So even though we call ourselves Americans, our fathers and mothers may have been Italian or French, and belonged to the Italic family; or German or Swedish or English, and belonged to the Teutonic family; or Irish or Welsh, and belonged to the Celtic family.

In this book we are going to talk about this great big Slavic family, with all the relatives and their children, the cousins who have never seen each other, perhaps, and who live in different kinds of houses, go to different churches, and even speak a slightly different language—much more different than cousins who have lived all their lives in Kansas City and Boston, or Texas and Maine.

Perhaps we think of these people, some of whose names we have so lately learned, as "new" because some of their governments are younger than ours. But as a matter of fact, their family is older than ours and in their countries there was culture and education and there were golden ages of wide-spread kingdoms long before Columbus crossed the ocean blue.

We have been a little inclined to think, from things we learned in school—and out of it—that

history began in 1492 and that 1776 is a date revered and celebrated all over the world. Undoubtedly these are both important dates, but often they are the only ones that many of us in the United States are absolutely sure of.

It is a little late—or possibly too early—to ask history please to designate its centuries by color or some such scheme, so we shall have to do the best we can. Since dates are such bothersome things and so hard to remember, we shall use just as few of them as we possibly can.

Let us take one of the dates we know so well—1492. What was happening to the Slavic family while Columbus was busy planting the flag of Spain on our shores? In talking about this Slavic family we might think of it as being grown-up earlier than ours, just as our aunts and our grandmothers are older and more experienced, naturally, than we are. We may sometimes believe we know better than they do about some matters, such as eating cookies between meals and going to the movies on school-nights, but still we have to admit that their years give them a certain authority in some respects.

Well, the Slavs were tremendous youngsters about nine hundred years ago, in spite of the fact that some of them are now known as "new nations." They grew and grew and quarreled with each other and other folk, and prospered and had bad luck, built up great universities and palaces

and churches, and busied themselves a great deal generally.

In fact, a great deal of history had been written in the Slavic family Bible by the time the American Indians had the shock of seeing strangers land in their country. Before 1492 Russia was a widespread empire; Poland had given to Europe its first parliamentary state, which meant that the common man was a citizen and had something to say about how schools and government should be run; Bohemia, which is now a part of Czechoslovakia, was a great and powerful kingdom. The South-Slavs, now united as the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, had been free states and had lost their independence long before 1492. Altogether, the ups and downs of this family had been many and various long before Jamestown was a village on the James River.

In the same year that the Pilgrim fathers landed on Plymouth Rock, 1620, the Czechs in Bohemia were defeated by the Germans at the great battle of White Mountain. The next year, twenty-four Czech nobles, the leaders of the nation, were taken out into the public square and executed, and this was the sad end of Bohemia's independence. When a Czechoslovak schoolboy passes the old city hall in Prague today, he sees in the flagged pavement in great letters the date 1621, and beneath it crosses indicating the spot where the leaders died so bravely.

And then, while our great-grandfathers in 1775 were excitedly preparing for the struggle to gain their independence, Poland, which had been well-nigh the bravest and most courageous of all the Slavic branches of the family, lost her liberty. But she did not lose her courage, even though her victors divided up her territory among themselves and tried hard to Russianize and Germanize her people. Three times her kingdom was divided up,—by Russia, Austria, and Prussia,—until in 1795, about the time our young American republic was old enough to toddle about, poor Poland was completely partitioned. Meanwhile, the South-Slavs were struggling to free themselves from Turkey and Austria-Hungary, but Serbia alone won her independence. This was accomplished in 1817.

And so, only Russia, of all the Slavic cousins, remained in charge of her old family estates; but she had her troubles, too, the story of which is longer and sadder than that of the other Slavic peoples can possibly be. Because she is territorially so great and so far-reaching, she is called "Mother Russia," and many people believe that some day there will be a grand homecoming of all the relatives and that they will live happily ever after. But as to that we can't say.

This very meager outline of what was happening to the Slavs while we were learning to talk shows that the peoples of the world are all more

or less alike, and all very much tangled up in each other's affairs.

Just as we in our country have been trying to express our belief in freedom and to find noble uses for it, even though we fail so miserably some of the time, these Slavic peoples, in subjection, have clung to their belief in freedom and their conviction that only as free Slavs can they make their contribution to the world. Throughout all the hundreds of years of living under foreign domination they have stuck to these beliefs and have demonstrated to the world a very real and glorious patriotism.

And what is patriotism? Can we say what it is? Is it thinking that our country is the best in the world? How can we say that our country is the greatest and noblest, the richest and the proudest, the biggest and the happiest? Does saying it make it so? People have been saying such things about their own countries and their tribes and their families ever since there was any world, I think, and, moreover, believing them. Is just loving our flag and our country patriotism? We are discovering how much a part of the whole world we are, and nowadays when we say, "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States and to the republic for which it stands! One nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all," we are not thinking only of our family and our neighborhood, or even of our country alone, for

the peoples of the earth are shareholders in our flag and stand with us to make it grow in nobility.

Here, then, is worthwhile adventure for us that outstrips the plodding ox-teams that Jed followed—the adventure that is youth's today in America—to do one's part toward making all the world "one country indivisible with liberty and justice for all."

We have learned to sing about America as "the land of the free and the home of the brave." What is freedom? Until I was about sixteen years old I used to feel that America was the only "free country" in the world. I was very thankful indeed that I had been born in the United States of America so that I did not have to do just what some king took a notion to have me do. I firmly believed that royalty could walk into any candy shop and take what it wished without paying a cent for it. No weekly allowances for princes! All they needed to do was to say, "I'll take one of these, and one of these," and walk off with them. In a vague way I used to think it would be rather hard on a storekeeper if a king should come in too often. In those days life was pretty well bounded and measured by how far the weekly allowance would go and whether Mother would say yes or no. Freedom to my young mind had little to do with the language I should speak or rulers outside the circle of parental and school authority.

As a young Republic we have had very much to say about freedom, as though it were a new idea, and one we originated. As a matter of historical fact, early in the fifteenth century, before our Republic was born, the Slavs were very much interested in the precious thing called freedom. The Poles were the first people in Europe to write down in a great conference the basic principle of freedom: "Equals with equals and free with freemen." Freedom to the Slav is said to be the dearest possession on earth, and many Slavic writers and poets have spoken wisely and understandingly about it. One of them wrote: "Only that man deserves freedom, who knows how to worship others' freedom. That man who puts prisoners into irons is himself a slave; and that man who puts the hands or tongue into irons, is the same."

This love of liberty and, more than that, justice for everyone is shown in many of the national songs of Slavic peoples. In their dignified and beautiful national hymns there is no expression of aggression or domination. For a home of their own and harmony within themselves and with their neighbors they ask, for being wise with the sufferings of centuries, they know these things will make a "land of the free and the home of the brave."

One of the national songs of Czechoslovakia is typical of the Slav's love for his homeland. The

following translation is not perfect, but it will give an idea of the spirit of a real national anthem:

> Where is my home? Where is my home?
> Streams among the meadows creeping,
> Brooks from rock to rock leaping,
> Everywhere bloom spring and flowers
> Within this paradise of ours;
> There, 'tis there, the beauteous land!
> Bohemia, my fatherland!
> Where is my home, where is my home,
> Knowest thou the country loved of God,
> Where noble souls in well-shaped forms reside,
> Where the free glance crushes the foeman's pride?
> There wilt thou find the Czechs, the honored race,
> Among the Czechs be aye my dwelling place.

This deep desire to be themselves—to work and talk and live as Slavs, as they were born—has kept the Slavic spirit alive all these many, many years and is bringing the members of this big family into freedom once more. After hundreds of years the World War, in spite of its horrors, brought back national independence to the Slavs —all of them.

Perhaps it was because we as a nation are still conscious of our newly-acquired freedom that we were glad to be present at the signing of another "Declaration of Independence." In the same room in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, in which, only one hundred and forty-eight years ago, John Hancock and his associates signed the American

Declaration of Independence, on October 26, 1918, representatives of twelve mid-European nations—over half of them Slav—signed a second "Declaration." This was a "Declaration of Common Aims," proclaiming their irrevocable hatred of the autocratic tyranny that had held them in subjection for centuries, and their belief in the principle that "all governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed." [1]

To celebrate this historic occasion, a second Liberty Bell, cast in the model of the first and paid for by the children of the oppressed nationalities now living in this country, was rung. The leader of the group in Independence Hall was Thomas G. Masaryk, who became the revered and beloved first President of the new Republic of Czechoslovakia.

Poland, so long divided up and ruled by three great foreign powers, found herself after the World War almost an entity again. Russia, after many years of oppression and slavery at the hands of her own czars, whose cruelty was encouraged by foreign influence, rose in a mighty revolution which resulted in a kind of government different from any the world has ever known. This government is called a "soviet," and it is unlike either a republic or a monarchy. The whole Russian family has been very ill for a long time and many members of it have died from terror, hun-

[1] *The Survey*, November 2, 1918.

ger, and punishment. We are still wondering what is to come from this long sickness of oppression and revolution.

After centuries of war, throughout which the South-Slavs had repeatedly tried to establish themselves as one national community, they at last united in a kingdom which is called the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, and of which we usually speak as Jugoslavia.

But, republic, soviet, and kingdom alike have had anything but an easy time and since our own growing pains as a republic are still apparent, we try to remember to be sympathetic toward them.

If we shut our eyes a moment, can we draw in the air a pattern that carries out a mental image of our rough map of the Slavs?[1] For Russia we shall have to make a great sweep down our diagonal line about half way—in our mind's eye—and then cut off to the right to make a rough triangle. For Poland we can trace an outline of a boy putting his coat on over his head with his arms waving in the air and a breeze blowing the coat tail a little to the right. Czechoslovakia has been said to resemble in outline a despondent tennis shoe, so hold up before your imagination a last summer's "Ked" by the nape of its neck so that the toe droops down, and there it is, right under the coat tail of Poland and almost as large. And

[1] See map in front of book.

now we have to take a mental standing broad jump over Austria and Hungary, for it is not so far as a running broad jump would carry us, to Jugoslavia. Maps always look like animals or people to me and Jugoslavia looks very much like a fat, gasping, big-tailed fish being jerked up out of the water,—with your left hand,—for his gaping mouth opens right on a line with the British Isles which lie to the left of our diagonal line and of course you can draw them in the air without thinking twice about it.

There is a Serbian writer who has said, "A man, when he is thinking about the sun, seems to feel its warmth." So if we are thinking about the Russians, the Poles, the Czechoslovakians, the Jugoslavs, and the smaller divisions of the Slavic family which we are including in these groups, we are bound to feel some of their warmth and humanness. It will be ever so much nicer to think of them in that way instead of as mere names that are connected in some way with a colored map.

Let us remember for a moment the boy Jan who lives in the next block, who was born right here in the toe of the old tennis shoe, and see if the prospect of knowing more about him after a while won't make it easier to feel "the warmth of the sun which we are thinking about."

I remember that I studied Greek for a long time in high school and then in college before I really became aware of how alive and real those old

Greeks were. I always thought of their armor shining and glistening in the sun, of their disciplined marching and heroic fighting, quite as if they had been wooden soldiers. Then one day I happened to be reviewing a passage in the *Anabasis* where Xenophon is describing some wonderful battle. After the fight the soldiers literally "skedaddled" (the Greek verb sounds exactly like this very expressive one) down to the shore. There they prepared supper and wept as they peeled the onions! That homely little passage put life into my Greek soldiers and always thereafter they were real persons as they fought and marched and marched and fought their way on to the sea. No longer were they a phantom army that ran breathless, breaking ranks, to see and smell again the beloved blue waters that meant home was again near at hand. I ran with the weary men, and felt their joy and relief after that heroic and famous retreat of the ten thousand. So, if sharing a common experience with the Greeks of ancient history made them real to me, how much easier it should be to have the Slavs become very real to us, inasmuch as so many of them are our neighbors here in our own country, sharing our work, our play, our churches, everything that is American.

It is difficult to say, "A Slav is this, or that!" No one can be so described. One cannot pick out a man with a bushy dark beard and say, "He is a Russian." Nor can one select a round-faced, rosy-

cheeked girl and say, "She is surely a Slovak." In outward appearance Slavs vary greatly.

But in many ways Slavs are very much alike. A Slavic writer with a very long name, Professor Radosavljevich, has described the Slav of today as being "strong and prolific, capable of doing, as well as suffering, anything, when his heart is in it; he is at the bottom pious, simple, kind, and praise-loving; he is very patient, sober, thrifty, capable of laborious effort peculiar to an agriculturist life; possessed of great powers of endurance and perseverance; home-loving, devoted to religion, and enthusiastic for the ideal of humanity. . . . By instinct, tradition, and moral sense the Slavs love freedom, but they also possess a wakening thirst for knowledge and love for truth. Music and songs are the gift of the whole Slavic race. It was so in ancient time, and is now. The object of all culture and civilization of the modern Slav is human well-being."

It has been partly due to his good qualities that the Slav has been led to his undoing in the past. Because he was not aggressive, he has been conquered. Suspicion of his own kind has often been greater than mistrust of foreign leadership, a fact which has made him politically impractical. As the world slowly learns a few lessons in brotherhood, the Slavs are showing that they have an essential characteristic which is an enormous advantage to them in their efforts. That character-

istic is democracy, and because it is a real democracy and not an imagined one, their present struggles to regain their feet concern us all.

As we sit here looking at our map and trying to fill it with people who really walk about the streets of the cities, or work in the fields of the beautiful green country, or toil among the mountains; as we try to listen to the songs they may be singing to us across the miles of land and ocean space, we may feel that we should like to know a little better this big lovable family of many children. How can we know them, talk with them, sing with them?

It was not long after the Civil War that the Slavs began to come to this country, though records show them to be even among the earliest settlers of America. It was adventure such as we seldom know in our fairly dull lives—seeking a new home, braving a new language, crossing a terrible, unknown sea after traveling through several strange and indifferent countries. Perhaps Indians and unpeopled prairies would be kinder than the enemies of unfamiliarity and helplessness that such pioneers as these Slavic families met in their journeying.

As years went on, more and more of these Slavic pioneers set out, with their hearts beating fast and their hope shining bright. Freedom was to be theirs at the end of the journey, and life would start afresh in the wonderful new land, the beautiful and

yet terrifying country where every man was his own ruler.

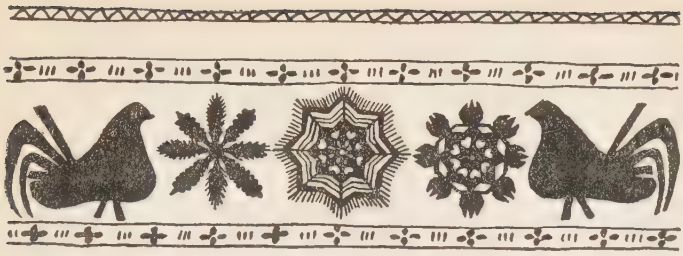
During the last years very many families from the countries we have been getting acquainted with have undertaken the high adventure of pioneering. Finding political or religious or economic persecution at home too great to bear, men have packed up a few belongings and departed with their wives and children for a land as new and unknown to them as Oregon was to Jed and the pioneer families that traveled across the long trail in the covered wagons.

But of course these pioneer families have been few in comparison to those who remained at home to carry on the struggle against oppression and to continue the determination to live and remain Slavs. Gradually, out of the distress and turmoil that reached the highest point during the World War, these nations that form the Slavic family are now building up their house of life again in their own countries. And like small brothers who insist upon buttoning their own buttons even if they do come out all uneven, they are learning how to do things in their own way, and, incidentally, they have many wise things to show some older but not always wiser governments.

"A man when he is thinking about the sun, feels its warmth." How can we think about these world neighbors of ours and not find that they are very worth while knowing!

A LONG LOOK ACROSS THE SEA

Everywhere it is good, but home is best.
A Slovak proverb



Polish paper cut-outs.

CHAPTER THREE

A Long Look Across the Sea

It is all very well to say in speaking of the new neighbors that have moved in across the street, "The Browns seem to be a happy, pleasant, musical family," but it does not tell us enough about them. We wish to know what the Brown children are like, if they are in high school, what Sunday school they go to, if they play baseball well, and what kinds of books they have; also if they are well behaved, and if they have a strict mother!

New families of Slavs are often moving in as neighbors of ours in this country. Often they literally do move in across the street from us. Naturally we wonder what they are like, not only because they are likely to become new friends of ours, but also because they are of different origin from us. If we have some idea about the country of their birth, or their parents' birth, we shall take a more intelligent and pleasant interest in these

new Americans, and our exchange of experience will be more nearly even.

In this chapter, therefore, we are going to talk about the homes of these Slavic neighbors in their native land. We shall try to see with our mind's eye the young people of the Slavic family as they are in their different countries, and put on the map which we have drawn some of the things which have made up their every-day life—their rugged mountains, grassy plains, colorful villages, busy cities, their occupations—everything, in fact, that is characteristic of them. In this way, our map will grow to be something more than just a criss-cross of boundaries and a jumble of unfamiliar names.

All of the Slav countries are agricultural, and since the majority of the Slavic immigrants who come to this country come from the open places where they have tilled the soil for a living, we shall talk mostly about peasant, or farmer, life. The life in cities is very much the same the world over, but it is in the villages of a nation that the heart of a people is to be seen. Let us start with the country of the Russians, even though we have shown only a small part of it on our map. Since Russia occupies about one sixth of the earth's surface, it is not easy to describe her physical features. Because she lies so far to the north, there are still many characteristics of a glacial country—great

plains extending across a vast area—the treeless, endless steppes of Russia. It is this uniformity of physical feature that is so striking. Because of the long, extremely cold winters, we often do not remember the warm summers; but it becomes so hot for a short period in summer that a whole village will often turn out in the early morning for a swim.

The great broad plains, which are very fertile, and the wide range of temperature have made of Russia a farming country. Therefore we find small villages everywhere, with the majority of people living in them rather than in big cities.

It is sad to know that this powerful "Mother Russia" has been a poor provider for the many millions of people living within the wide circle of her arms. The peasant and his family have been poor, uneducated, and uncared for through so many centuries that the new government, which is supposed to be one in which the poor man at last has attention, is having a difficult time of it, for ignorance and poverty and bad health are not remedied in a few years.

The little peasant homes that are to be found in Russia and Poland and Czechoslovakia, or in any of the Slavic nations, are very much the same. As a rule they are built of wood or wattles, or often covered with plaster, and they stand in rows facing on the village "Main Street." This street is usually a very muddy stretch of road, and after wading

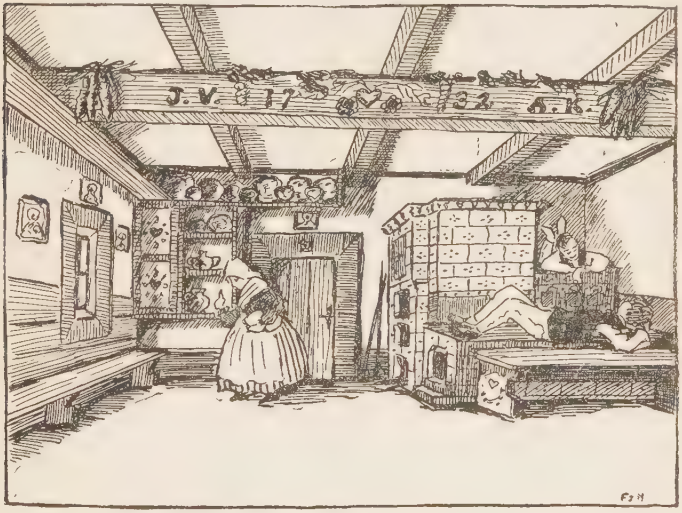
about in it, one understands why stout and even clumsy footwear is needed. At the end of the street will be found the village church and near it the burial plot. In parts of Poland and Russia, particularly where typhus epidemics break out with such frightful malignity, there are all too many of these sad cross-strewn places.

You will find no playground for children in these villages; the geese poke and waddle in the only wading pool. There is no cinema with tales of ships and pioneers, buccaneers and Indians, but tales stranger than those most scenario writers could tell are spun and woven into the summer nights on the doorsteps of the cottages or around the kind stove in the long winter nights.

Many of these villages of tiny houses make one think that he has stepped into a setting for a fairy opera. Some of the huts are so gay that one could imagine they were made of gingerbread and all one had to do was to go up and break off a piece of the roof in order to satisfy a craving for frosting. Sometimes the entire outside of a hut is covered with a painted design; sometimes the plaster is tinted a delicate blue, green, yellow, or rose, so that the whole group of such huts has a quaint and fairy-tale aspect. Then, too, the houses may be painted in very gaudy blues or greens or yellows which make them look picturesque but not altogether pretty.

It is hard to believe that real people live under

the low-hung thatched roofs and behind the tiny shuttered windows, but these gaily painted shutters entice us to look inside the toy houses. Such a glimpse is only tantalizing and, besides, the house-



The tiny houses sometimes seem to belong to a fairy-tale village.

wife is already smiling a frank welcome to us. *"Dobry den,"* we venture, and she assures us that it is a very fine day indeed. Once inside, we must eat bread and salt, an ancient Slavic custom indicating hospitality. Excellent black bread! We cannot say so much for the home-made wine which is bountifully poured for us. There is much to see and admire inside of this small space. The low ceiling is rounded down at the corners of the

room and painted sky blue. In the unclouded canopy gleam golden stars. It must be pleasant to cook always under the eye of heaven in this fashion. A frieze of color runs round the room on the white walls, color against color in intricate design, all painstakingly done by hand—no stencil used here. Beneath is a shelf of peasant pottery, plates and mugs, some of which have been in the family for generations. Other plates hang on the walls by a cord run through holes made by the potter for the purpose. And why shouldn't our plates and cups be used for ornament as well as for usefulness? The corner cupboards are hung with spotless strips of embroidered linen; the churn is the painted masterpiece of a long winter evening. There is always a big stove that is different from any we have ever seen, for the high, broad back is used in the day time by the children to play on, and at night it becomes a warm, comfortable bed for the old grandmother—or sometimes, indeed, for the entire family during the cold weather.

As we sit munching the crusty slice from the great round loaf that bears the initials of the host in the center of a heart, the imprint which distinguishes his share of the weekly baking at the village baker's, we can see into the other room of the tiny house. There, piled up on the carved wooden bed are stacked the feather beds, precious dowry of the peasant bride. These are the last possessions she will allow to pass from her hands;

they journey with her encased in hand-spun linen covers when she comes to join her husband in the land of promise, America. Whole flocks of goslings have had to be pastured by young goose-girls before one of these corpulent cushions reached its present state of repletion.

Here on the wall in a place of honor hangs the portrait of a young man with his bride, done in the best style of Josef Hudec, photographer, of Pittsburgh! Draped over it is a silk handkerchief embroidered with the Stars and Stripes and bearing the words "Souvenir of McKeesport." A fleeting picture of the tall chimneys and smoke-grimed air of the far-away Allegheny Valley in America rises to shut out the sweet cleanness of this room, and we understand a little the homesickness of that pioneering immigrant son, whose photograph we find in this little village, so far away from the crowded community of his new choice.

If we wish to know these new neighbors across the street, we must know them in their churches as well as in their homes. Not only the Russians but all Slavs are deeply religious by nature. I have often slipped into the rear of a peasant church in a Slavic town during service and listened with all reverence to the voice of the priest and the response of the hidden choir. The peasants, too tightly packed to kneel, with rapt faces lift their eyes to the altar or dreamily watch the flicker of

the tapers. Religion has colored their whole life nationally and individually. No part of their history could be considered without a knowledge of the influence of religion upon them. Perhaps it will be well to consider briefly at this point the churches to which our different Slavic families belong.

In the first place, Christianity did not come to the Slavs until many, many years after the teachings of Christ had spread from Palestine to Greece and Rome. Then a powerful Church with its center in Constantinople was founded. This Church grew so large that serious differences arose among its leaders, and in 864 A.D. some of the leaders said they would form a Church of their own, with its center in Rome, which should carry out their ideas. The Church in Constantinople was known as the Greek Church—Eastern Orthodox—to which the Russians and the Serbs adhere; and the Church in Rome was called the Latin Church—Roman Catholic—to which the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Slovenes, and Croats belong. Many years later a division of the Roman Catholic Church occurred which resulted in a new branch of Christianity called Protestantism. From the Eastern Orthodox Church a few millions of Slavs also withdrew, largely for political reasons, and they, organized under the Pope at Rome, are known as Greek Catholics, or Uniats. They have retained, along with their Eastern ideals of religion, their Eastern forms of service and they have a married priesthood. A Uniat priest

once explained to me the difference between this Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church in this way: "The Orthodox Church is a dead body without a head, and the Uniat Church is a dead body with a head." Whether that is altogether a happy comparison, I cannot say.

To our Protestant eyes, accustomed to exceedingly simple services of worship, the Orthodox and the Catholic Church services seem similar and equally strange. But we all have many things in common which, when they are understood, make the Orthodox and Protestant and Catholic Churches seem very much allied. While we all worship the same Jesus of Nazareth and take him as our Savior and Master, it is very confusing that we do not work together. That we have become so separated and estranged from each other must be a matter of great sorrow to the Little White Christ—as the Slavs sometimes call Jesus; but He is trusting us to make it right some day.

The Orthodox Church has its own head in each country, just as the Methodist or the Episcopal or any Protestant Church in the United States or any other country has its own organization within that country; the Roman Catholic Church in every country is controlled and advised by the Pope in Rome. Orthodox priests marry, as do Protestant ministers, except that they must marry before receiving their priesthood. If they wish to enter some of the high ranks of priesthood, Orthodox priests

must first become Black Monks. This Black Clergy is made up of priests who may or may not have been married before—they are often widowers and many of them have numerous descendants. Roman Catholic priests, on the other hand, are not allowed to marry at all. Orthodox service is conducted in the old Slavonic language; Roman Catholic mass is celebrated in Latin. Orthodox churches have no statues, but paintings and holy pictures—icons—hang in the churches and in every home; whereas the crucifix and holy statues are found in all Roman Catholic churches and homes. The Roman Catholic cross is the plain Latin cross, while the Orthodox cross has three bars. The short upper bar always bears an inscription of four Slavonic letters meaning "Jesus of Nazareth, Czar of Judea." The lower bar represents the one on which the feet of the crucified Jesus were nailed. In the Orthodox churches no musical instruments are used; the human voice, unaccompanied, provides the only music.

An old silver Russian cross.

In the countries belonging to the Orthodox faith there is used an alphabet that was adapted from the Greek alphabet by Cyril, a

monk of the ninth century, who was a missionary to the Slavs. The Russians and Serbians who, at this period, received Christianity from the Eastern Orthodox Church remained loyal to that Church and kept this alphabet. It resembles the Greek, but for his new converts, Cyril invented several new, additional symbols to represent typically Slavic sounds. Very queer and interesting this Cyrillic alphabet is, and also much more decorative than our angular Latin symbols.[1]

Imagine, however, how difficult it must be in the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes to have two national alphabets. The spoken languages are so little different that the Serbs and Croats can understand one another's speech, but when it comes to reading each other's language, it is another proposition, for one is written in the Cyrillic alphabet and the other in Latin.

Another difference between the adherents of these two Churches is in their calendars. The Orthodox countries have a calendar quite different from the Roman, so that their Christmas and New Year's celebrations are fourteen days later than ours. There has been much talk of doing away with both the old calendar and the Cyrillic alphabet under the new government of Orthodox countries. In fact, in Russia the civil calendar has

1 On the map in the front of the book, in the upper right-hand corner is the Cyrillic Alphabet. The words of the top line are *Russkya Abyka,* meaning "Russian A B C."

been changed; but the church calendar, which affects Christmas, feast days, and other holy days, remains as of old.

These are only a few of the differences that exist between the two Churches and which we find to be the predominant ones among Slavs. Unfortunately, it has too often been religion, the most precious possession of mankind, that has kept men at war one with another. Toleration for religious belief has been the hardest lesson we have had to learn, and it isn't learned yet. We cannot forget that one of the reasons that brought the Pilgrims to America was a desire for religious freedom. In spite of the fact that they in turn were rather intolerant, we have today in America great churches of all three of the above faiths—Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant.

It would take too long to tell how the Slavic countries happened to belong some to one Church and some to another. All we can do is to learn that, whatever his Church, the Slav is deeply and simply religious and loyal to his faith. Religion with him is not merely a Sunday sacrament, it is a part of his every-day life. His home has its shrine, his roadways are dotted with wayside crosses and chapels, his calendar of days is marked off by the progression of holy days and feast days of the saints. His God and his Savior are in his daily thinking and on his tongue in greeting and farewell.

There are many old folk tales told of the life of Jesus when He lived on earth and walked among the peasants. In them He is always the Master, but so gentle and so understanding a Lord; He speaks the language of the people, eats their food and shares His own, rewards and blesses in the daily familiar fashion of the peasant. Such a story as the following is told in Slovakia around the stove of an evening.

One warm summer's day Jesus and Peter were going from one village to another along the dusty narrow path that ran between two fields. As they approached the village, Jesus said:

"Peter, the place we are coming to is a poor little village. There has been sickness and misfortune during the winter so that there is but little food in the cottages. But the youngest daughter of the *starosta* is to be married tomorrow, and the bride will be carrying her poor little wedding-cake around the village to ask the villagers to attend her marriage. And also today the wife of the *starosta* will have *kolače* (cakes) and *slivovic* (wine) for visitors, but there is little enough to go around on this great occasion. So, Peter, do you and I refuse to eat cakes and say that we have eaten heartily in the *kavarna* near by."

Now Peter was tired and hungry, and while his good heart fully intended to do as the Master bade

him, he thought longingly of the frosted *kolače* and the cool *slivovic*.

Before the door of the *starosta's* cottage several neighbors were lounging and gossiping about the crops and weather, as farmers often do. The little bride in her next handsomest blouse was already thinking of the great day tomorrow, the most important in her life, when for once she could forget her hard dull life and be what she really was, a lovely young creature, wanting all the joys of life, yet having so few of them. Jesus stood watching the girl as she bent over her bridal bonnet,—a crown of tinsel and flowers with a pure frill of fine white linen,—and He silently blessed her. She looked up quickly and saw that two strangers were standing before her father's house, unnoticed. At once she jumped up and, calling her mother, offered the two men a place on the little wooden bench under the window.

Jesus and Peter were made welcome, given cold water and bread and salt. Then the kindly peasant mother bustled off to bring feast cakes for the unexpected guests. Jesus gently refused to accept any of the precious cakes, saying that they had but lately eaten. Peter, with a long face, shook his head, for the cakes made his mouth water so that he could utter no refusal. A second time the wife of the *starosta* offered the cakes and Jesus refused; Peter also dolefully refrained.

As Jesus became more and more engrossed in

discussion with the men and the old priest who joined the group, Peter followed the housewife into the house to ask for a drink of water. Again she hospitably urged the cakes upon him and though he could see that there were few enough of them he greedily took several and hid them in the pocket of his tunic, excusing himself on the ground that the woman had urged them on him after many refusals, and telling himself that Jesus need never know. But as he was about to satisfy his hunger with a generous bite of a *kolače,* Jesus arose and, calling to him, said that they must be on their way if they were to reach the next village before dark.

Now the path led through a lovely cool stretch of woods. White birches bordered the path, and birds were beginning to sing their evening songs.

As Jesus walked along, his head sunk in thought of the young bride who was facing her tomorrow with such a happy face, Peter said to himself, "A good chance to finish that *kolače.*" No sooner had he put it into his mouth than Jesus said so suddenly that Peter was startled into throwing away the cake, "Peter, what are you eating?" Peter swallowed hastily and answered truthfully enough, "Nothing, Master." Jesus continued his walk without looking around, and Peter told himself that that was a narrow squeak. But since Jesus seemed again lost in thought, the second *kolače* came out from Peter's wide girdle, and pop! into his mouth it went.

"Well, Peter," said Jesus, "what are you eating?"

"Why, nothing, Master," vowed Peter, hastily spitting out the delicious cake filled with cheese.

A third time Peter tried to satisfy his hunger, this time with his last *kolače,* a beautiful brown one filled with plum jam and a large raisin in the center. But no sooner had his tongue touched the sugar that had been dusted over it than Jesus asked for the third time what he was eating. Poor Peter threw the *kolače* as far behind him as he could and wailed that there was absolutely nothing in his mouth!

At last Jesus turned around in the narrow path and confronted the sorry-looking Peter, who looked so crestfallen that Jesus could not help smiling, though it was a rather sad little smile. "Peter, my son, do you go back along the path we have just come and bring me whatever you find growing there."

Peter wondered what on earth his Master meant and thought it was strange He had not said anything about the cakes, for he felt He surely knew about his dishonesty. But Peter was very human and thought that perhaps he had been cleverer than Jesus after all—and indeed he had not eaten the cakes; he had not had a chance, he thought aggrievedly.

Then all along the birch-bordered pathway, he began to see queer little round plants growing. "Strange! I did not notice these odd little fellows

a while ago," he said to himself. Then he remembered that he had been told to gather whatever he found growing by the path, so he hastily filled his pocket handkerchief with the soft round plants and returned to the stump of an old beech tree, where Jesus sat waiting for him.

Peter dumped the contents of his handkerchief into Jesus' lap and said triumphantly: "You see! There was nothing growing along the path but these miserable little things which I never even saw before!"

Jesus picked up one of the fresh round objects, which still smelt of the earth, and held it on the palm of his hand where Peter could see the delicate flutings of the under side, so like the edges of the bride's marriage bonnet. "From the food which you so unjustly took from those poor people and wasted, these mushrooms have grown, Peter," He said. "Since food was taken from poor people, food must be given back to them, and hereafter these little fruits of the moist earth shall be the food of poor people everywhere."

We who are accustomed to seeing mushrooms sold in the market for seventy-five cents a pound have to take this story on faith, but it is a fact that mushrooms are the food of peasants throughout Europe; they are their seasoning and their sauce. Baskets of them are gathered and dried and put away in bags hung on the rafters to be used throughout the

winter months. Many an immigrant family has brought a supply of this dried food among the feather beds and linens of the household goods. Often little pitchers and stools are made in the shape of mushrooms—the red ones with white spots.

Another folk tale of a simple, kind, and also fun-loving Jesus, shows how short-sighted is the eye of man.

One day as Jesus and Peter were wandering through the fields at harvest time, bringing blessings and cheer to the men and women working there, they came to a wayside shrine where they sat down to rest in the shade. The shrine was built on a slight rise of ground so that they could look out over the valley into the fields where the people were at work and beyond, where the white and tinted cottages lay in a ring around the village church. The day was mellow and clean; a slight breeze rose and rustled the leaves to accompany the swish, swish of the scythes through the grain.

The good air exhilarated Peter and made him feel masterful. He threw his arms about, gesticulating grandly as he sat at Jesus' feet below the weather-beaten shrine. He was grumbling a bit because Jesus had suggested that they go down into the field and offer their services to the harvesters as Jesus always did when work was going on.

"Humph," said Peter grumpily, "I wish I could be God for just one day."

"And why would you like to be God?" asked Jesus, smiling across the fields where He could see the bright head-handkerchief of a small girl tending geese.

Peter chewed on a straw reflectively and replied, "Because God can do just as He pleases and does not have to do things He does not like to do."

Jesus with a twinkle in his eye said, "All right, Peter, for this one day you shall be God."

Soon they arose from the shade and started down toward the village. They soon came upon the little goose-girl, who was switching a stick about in the dust disconsolately and watching her geese unhappily. Peter, who was feeling very proud to be God even for a day, held his head high under his old straw hat and patronizingly asked the child why she looked so unhappy.

"Because there is to be a feast in the village and I could help with the cakes if I did not have to tend these old geese," and a large tear began to crawl down her face. All of a sudden she brightened up and tied her red handkerchief more firmly under her chin. "But I shall go anyway," she declared; "it will be ever so much nicer than watching these dull things." She started up with a happy face and began to run across the field.

"Here! Hey!" yelled Peter. "Who is going to take care of your flock?"

"Oh, God will take care of them!" she cried and ran on.

Jesus laughed heartily at Peter and said, "Well, Peter, since you are God today, you will have to tend the geese!" and, still laughing, He hurried after the child to accompany her to the village and see that she was not scolded for leaving her geese.

Peter sat glumly on the edge of the field as he kept the white birds from straying, and he reflected that God did not have everything his own way after all.

As a spiritual guide for the villages, the priest has always played the part of "little father." He is called upon to settle all disputes and to be everywhere, tireless and patient. Often the whole spirit of the village will depend upon the kind of man it has for priest.

In the Russian home an icon, or holy picture, always hangs near the entrance and everyone crosses himself when approaching it. On our map let us make a cross like the one in our illustration,[1] to indicate the Orthodox faith to which the majority of people in Russia have belonged since Prince Vladimir introduced Christianity from Constantinople in the tenth century.

In Polish homes there hangs a crucifix in place of an icon, for the Polish nation is largely Roman Catholic, having been converted to Christianity by missionaries from Rome. A common saying in Poland is, "If he is not a Catholic he is not

[1] See end-paper map; also illustration on page 72.

a Pole," just as it used to be true that all Russians were followers of the Orthodox Church.

It is not easy to designate the religion of Czechoslovakia, but Czechoslovakia is the home of Jan Hus, the great Czech patriot and preacher who was burned at the stake in 1415 for daring to fight against the intolerance of the Church. From the life and martyrdom of Jan Hus sprang the whole movement called the Reformation, from which Protestantism was born. And so in the country of Jan Hus we find that the majority of the people are neither Protestant nor Catholic, but are seeking to find a satisfactory expression of their religious beliefs through a Church of their own. The new Czechoslovak National Church has been formed since the birth of the Republic and is more like the Orthodox than the Catholic Church.

Slovakia is largely Roman Catholic in its adherence, and its peasants are markedly more simple and pious in their faith than the Bohemians (Czechs).

The folk festivals of the Russians, as of all Slav peoples, are largely of religious origin. Christmas and Easter are especially great occasions. It would take a very big book indeed to describe all of the interesting things that a Slavic boy or girl does during these widely celebrated festivals.

Christmas is celebrated as the real birthday of the Little One by all Slavs and it retains the import of His coming much more than our gift-obscur-

ing observance. The Slavic Santa Claus is known as St. Nikolas, a jovial fellow, who, on each sixth of December, comes to earth by way of a golden cord,

St. Nikolas and his companions, the "andula" and the "čert."

accompanied by a lovely angel bearing a great basket of gifts, and a mischievous devil held in leash by the good saint. St. Nikolas asks each boy and girl if he or she has a good record to show.

If so, the *andula* hands out a gift; but if the child has been naughty, the black and ferocious *čert* whacks him with his willow switches. The rôle of *čert* is a cherished one on this rollicking day, and it must be admitted that he is fond of thumping both the just and the unjust, amid the shrieks and scramblings of all present.

In the market-places on December sixth St. Nikolas and his two companions are seen in every guise. There they stand in a tempting row made of gingerbread and frosting; here, on a wire, their paper garments flutter in the cool breeze; and again, hand-carved in wood, they await a purchaser.

In Serbia the whole Christmas celebration is woven round the *Badgnak,* which corresponds to the Anglo-Saxon Yule Log. In the preparation for this great occasion, the boys of the family have all the fun, as so often happens among simple peoples. The *Badgnak* is sacred and must not be touched by ungloved hands or by women. The men and boys make a great to-do about cutting it from a straight young oak tree on the morning of the day before Christmas. In the evening it is brought indoors with much ceremony and laid on the open fire. The flames leap up around it, and the blessing of God is asked by the father of the family. Everything connected with the *Badgnak* is done with great solemnity. Once lighted, it is not allowed to go out until it is all consumed; otherwise, bad luck will descend upon the household.

The simple hearts of the peasant folk seem very close to the Little One on the evening of his birthday, and, in remembrance of his lowly coming, all the furniture is removed from the hut and bundles of straw are laid on the floor in the form of a cross. They say that they are no better than their Master who was born a peasant like themselves.

One of the nicest parts of the Serbian Christmas is the gift-giving to the animals. Besides every member of the family, from the father to the littlest child in the cradle, the beasts in the stalls and the chicks in the courtyard, and even the fields, receive a present of a Christmas cake.

While the animals are munching their extra portion of food in the barn and the Christmas tapers are burning brightly over their stalls, the feast goes on with dancing and singing indoors, for great gaiety characterizes these feast days as well as solemnity and piety. But even after a long night of watching and merry-making, no one stays away from church next day.

It is indeed not strange that the Slav feels a stranger in our land, and suffers the intensest homesickness cut off as he is, here, from such familiar gatherings. And just as his Christmas observance becomes changed in the prosaic surroundings of the industrial community in which too often he is found in America, so does his church seem to lose the comfort and peace it had given him in his own land.

In the spring, as Easter approaches, when the earth is housecleaning for the coming of summer, every hut is furbished and freshened until it shines. The outside must be whitewashed and tinted afresh, walls and benches redecorated, and embroideries freshened. The stove reflects the image of everything around it, and the handsomest costumes are laid out to wear on Easter Sunday.

The boys and girls are busy making many different kinds of Easter eggs—and very beautiful ones they make, too. The favorite way is to paint the blown shell with beeswax. When the wax is hard, part of a design is traced in it with a pin point and this design is traced with a colored dye. When the dye is dry, more of the design is traced in the wax

"Veselé Velikonoce!"

with the pin and these lines are traced with a different colored dye. This is repeated until several colors cover the shell in a very intricate pattern. Then the remainder of the wax is melted off with a hot dry cloth, leaving only enough to give the egg shell a soft polish. This is a very interesting and a very easy way to dye Easter eggs if you would like to try it sometime.

In Russia at Easter time the boys are privileged to ring the bells of the churches whenever they take a notion to do so, and the air is merry with peals of bells all day. The girls, alas, do not have the fun of pulling the bell ropes. This seems rather an unkind discrimination, doesn't it?

There are times, however, when the girls are privileged to do things while the boys must stand around and watch. I once happened to be in a little Slovak village on Palm Sunday, when many preparations were being made for Easter. A bride was showing me her very beautiful bonnet that was to be worn Easter morning, and the housewife was assuring me that the spotless house was terribly dirty, but that it would all be in order in time for *Velikonoce,* when all of a sudden, through the low doorway, came the sound of many little feet and shrill childish voices chanting breathlessly. We reached the street in time to see a crowd of little girls—all the younger ones of the village—sweep by, bearing with them a leafless sapling that rattled and

A gaily frosted perníček

rustled in the wind of their hurry. From every branch and twig hung gay Easter eggs that bobbed and knocked against each other with tiny flat noises. Ribbons streamed from the tree over the little handkerchiefed heads, and every pair of lungs was ceaselessly employed in shouting something that sounded like, "Raspberry, strawberry, sugar and cream." Up one side of the village street and down the other tore the full-skirted band, to halt finally in front of us, all talking at once and offering us colored eggs. How they divided up the spoils collected in exchange for their eggs at the end of their dusty whirl, I do not know. But all the boys eyed them a little enviously, we thought, as now and then a shouter punctuated her "raspberry, strawberry" with a munch of a *perníček.*

But life for these young folks is not all bell-ringing and egg-trees, and we must now know them at work as well as at home, in church, and at play. There are few Slavic children who do not work as hard and as long as grown-ups. In a great many cases there is no school to interfere with the boys' or girls' share in supporting the family. With the

exception of Bohemia, there are very many boys and girls among the people of the Slav countries who can neither read nor write, a fact which does not surprise one after seeing the way in which children have to work during the years when they should be in school. Under the new governments, however, education is already being made more possible for the children of these peasant folk.

Early in the morning the whole village starts out for the fields, which often lie quite a little distance away. Even the babies go, each slung over his mother's back in a big square of linen. In the field a little tent is arranged for him and there he spends his day, growing fat and rosy in the sunshine. At noon the family gathers around his little white tepee and eats the simple meal of bread and curds or sheep's milk cheese. A meal of "black bread" and cheese is very tasty, too, after a morning of hard work. Before I had seen black bread, I pictured a doughy mass of something very black indeed. As a matter of fact, it is not nearly so dark as our Boston brown bread, for instance, and it is so crusty and good that I often wish I could exchange our white bread for it. There is a peasant expression, "He is like bread," which is a great compliment, for it means, "He is solid and dependable and altogether indispensable."

One of the tasks oftenest assigned to children is the care of the geese and the herds. All day long they wander in the fields, tended by the little folks.

There is always a pond in the village for the geese, and little girls to look after the fat, white waddlers.

Since a flock of geese may be the whole fortune of a family, an ever watchful eye is needed. In the dusk of evening when the fat sleek birds begin to waddle sedately back toward the village, little groups of children may be found along the roadside gathered around a tiny bright fire. There they exchange the day's experiences or tell tales which *babička* has told. Sometimes there are *bramboury* to roast and as the geese forage softly near at hand, the odor of roasting potatoes mixes with the mist that rises from the low places of the fields. When the fire has burned quite out and the last potato is regretfully pulled out of the ashes, they start homeward. The small solid figures of the children follow the white waddlers through the darkness, and before long they are sound asleep in some small corner of the crowded cottage.

Just such a little herd boy was Professor Michael Pupin of Columbia University. You would indeed enjoy reading the book he has written of his own life,[1] from the time he lay dreaming on a Serbian hillside, through the time when, like Jan and Jed, he ventured forth from his old home, until now when he is famous as an inventor and scientist.

Music, literature, and other arts of the Slavs are deeply imbedded in the soil and life of their countries, and much of their inspiration springs from the simple homely life such as we have been describ-

[1] *From Immigrant to Inventor.* Michael Pupin. Scribner.

ing. A real national culture cannot be acquired from foreign sources; if it is, it rests upon a nation like a borrowed hat that does not fit.

The great men and women of a country, whether singers or painters, writers or inventors, statesmen or scholars, sooner or later belong to the world, and yet their native country has a just pride in them, as they have in her. As the centuries roll by, these great ones belong more and more to the world. Even so, Bohemia does not forget that Komensky (Comenius), scholar and educator, was a Czech, or that Jan Hus (John Huss), forerunner of the Reformation, was martyred for trying to save Bohemia from the tyranny of Rome. Likewise do the Poles proudly honor their Copernicus, who gave to the world so much of the science of stars.

The list of famous Slavic musicians and writers is so long that we cannot mention all the names, but it may be interesting to note a few of those seen constantly on the discs of your Victrola records or in your music books, in your school books or in the newspapers. With how many of these names are you familiar? Chopin was a Pole; so are Paderewski, Kochanski, Madame Sembrich, the de Reszkes. Madame Curie, the discoverer of radium, is Polish, although she married a Frenchman. Famous Czech musicians whose names you probably know are Dvořák, Kubelik, Kocian, Emmy Destinn. Among Russian musicians we find Tschaikowsky, Rachmaninoff, Heifetz, Chaliapin—all familiar

names. And later we shall know the great Slavic writers: Tolstoi, Turgeniev, Dostoievsky. Pavlova, the most famous of dancers, is Russian.

Without the gifts which the Slavs have made to the world, we should be much less rich than we are. With the help of the Slavs in our own land who have sprung from a richly endowed race and with the gifts which many other nations and races have added to our own, we shall some day build up a national culture that will glow and live as the gift of America to the world.

LONELY STRANGERS
IN A NEW LAND

A lie has short legs, it cannot run far.

A Czech proverb

A typical Czech design.

CHAPTER FOUR

Lonely Strangers in a New Land

Men have always had faith in the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow and many are the journeys that are set out upon to discover this fabulous crock. We still conduct expeditions to recover the hidden treasures of Captain Kidd, even though someone claims recently to have proved that he was a respectable gentleman who had no treasure to hide. We really like to explore rainbows and dig the seas and islands for yellow gold and excitement, and will listen readily to tales of "easy money."

Therefore, since time began there have been men who have made it a business to play upon the imaginations of other men, deliberately filling the mind of the would-be adventurer with absurd falsehoods. Of course these men have always received tidy sums of money for their trouble, either from the victim himself or from someone interested in getting him to come to the spot of supposed wealth.

In Europe the most common type of this sort of person has been the steamship agent. The agent, in order to get many passengers for his line, has told wonderful tales of America, the land of plenty, where cows walk in the streets and may be had for the taking; where farms may be bought for a song; a land where everyone does as he pleases, pays no taxes, and is free from military duty and political restriction of all kinds; food costs almost nothing in this country of the agent's fabrication, and homes are given to newcomers free of rent.

Great industries in our country, in need of strong men to do the heart-breaking labor of their mills, have also influenced thousands of men to leave their fairly happy lot in their own country to seek the marvelous opportunities pictured in the New World.

Still other families are moved to emigrate by the enthusiasm of friends who really have found happiness in making more money than they could have earned at home, by their tales of electricity and other comforts and high wages, just as Jan's father was determined to emigrate after hearing the letters of his friend's brother. Perhaps the majority of these families have eventually found happiness, and many of them have found prosperity in the United States even though the tales that brought them were soon found to be untrue. Many others, however, have either remained here lonely and disillusioned, or returned home empty-handed and broken-

hearted. But whatever the reason that has brought them to this country, they come as pioneers and as pioneers they must suffer the pioneers' hardships, which invariably include loneliness and disappointment.

Picture to yourself the number of strange new things that all the members of Jan's family had to become accustomed to during the first years of their life in America. On the journey from their own country they experienced for the first time the difficulties of trying to make themselves understood in a language foreign to their own, the intricacies of foreign money, and the taste of strange foods. But on that long and sometimes terrible journey they could hope for the end of all these discomforts and misunderstandings. As a rule, people fear the things they do not understand and are unhappier over them than over the things they dislike but do understand. How much worse it is, then, when one realizes that the end of the journey is only the beginning of a long process of new and trying experiences. And instead of a welcoming goddess standing with the torch of enlightened tolerance on the shores of the new and golden land of promise, there is, for the majority of immigrants coming to our country, the ordeal of examination at the port of entry, and a very real ordeal this is.

At the time when the lad Jan Marcovič came to America, any number of strangers could enter if

they showed themselves sound of mind and body, if they could read and write, and if they had a certain amount of money to insure a living until work could be found. But during the World War we realized for almost the first time that about one third of our population was made up of these pioneering families from all over the world, and that they had come in such numbers and so rapidly that we were altogether unable to care for them in a way that would be best for the country and best for them. We found that we were making little effort to teach them our laws and customs or to give them an opportunity to learn the language of their new country.

After great deliberation and months of study, our government decided to cut down the enormous number of people coming into the United States from all over the world. A law was passed in 1921 which is popularly known as the "Quota Law." It states that only the number of immigrants equaling three per cent of their nationality living in this country at the time of the 1910 Census may be admitted during the space of a year. In other words, roughly speaking, for every thousand Slovaks (or Russians or Italians or Swedes, etc.) registered in the 1910 Census, thirty Slovaks may enter the United States in a year's time.

To go into the working of this law would take a book in itself, for it has not been an easy law to administer. At the present time it is being revised

and, for the next few years, immigration will probably be cut down still further. However, this cutting down of the numbers of people from other countries who may be admitted each year to the United States has not lessened, as yet, the hardships of travel or hastened the process of turning Slavs into Americans.

And the same overcrowding that was taking place in our country is showing itself also in our schools. A city finds suddenly that it has grown up faster than it had realized. Children are crowding into school buildings that are not large enough to accommodate them all. Classes grow too large for a teacher to handle; studies suffer, and great larks are held under a distracted principal's nose. What can we do? Buildings cannot go up over night like Aladdin's palace, and so one school building has to house two schools—one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Fuss and complain as our parents may at the scanty education such an arrangement gives us, it is the best that can be done, since the city was not foresighted enough to prepare for greater school attendance. It is not always easy to be either foresighted or wise enough afterward to make up for lack of foresight and so, just as in the example of the school buildings, our immigration has become one of our most serious problems. It is far too involved for us to consider further just now. Leaving it to the care of statesmen and students, let us return to our pioneers.

In the days of the World War, when statistics of all kinds leaped into prominence, the startling facts about immigration became known. People were amazed to learn that whole companies of United States soldiers had to be taught English before they could understand their officers' commands. We heard about frantic foreign women who had to be pacified and educated into the whys and wherefores of their menfolks' summons to the army. Many men had come to this country to escape military service, and their wives and mothers, thousands upon thousands of women who were unable to read or understand the government's explanations of all this horror, were demanding in strange tongues reasons for this "injustice."

It was a bad time all around, and a lot of people who lived through it would rather not talk about it. War does strange things to sensible people, and I can only hope that you who read this book may never experience it. These humble people, to whom we had paid so little attention in the past, suddenly seemed to many of the English-speaking people of our country to be a menace, a calamity. At once we insisted that we must "Americanize the foreigners."

Imagine the feelings of the Slovak family who had come here to escape Magyarization, or the Poles who had fled from Russianization or Germanization. They had thought to find here independence and a little peace of mind along with better living

conditions. Slowly they were reaching out for what seemed good in our national life. If we had not so greedily hugged all the goodies under our jackets and had offered to share a little with these stranger-folk, we might have found them less strange now. But we had been greedy and indifferent, and it was partly the terrible War which shook us ever so slightly out of our complacence.

In the course of our determined onslaught against the "foreigner," in our effort to bring about a standard Americanization of him, we learned some surprising things. We had to seek him out in his own community, and there we discovered that he sought recreation in music and drama to an unusual extent.

In the ill-lighted, poorly-arranged national hall of the Russians we found a stirring folk-drama being presented, made colorful and unique with strangely beautiful costumes. We were charmed and delighted by intricate and energetic dances that no amount of American agility could master.

We saw on the walls of these Slavic halls portraits of men evidently highly thought of by the folk we had come to Americanize. We learned their seemingly unpronounceable names and gradually realized that some of them were old acquaintances whom we had always taken for granted.

There was Komensky, for example, the great Czech scholar and historian, whom we had always known as Comenius and vaguely thought of as a

great European. There was Kosciuszko, one of Washington's own generals in our Revolution, everywhere present in Polish homes and halls—the idolized leader under whom Poland gloriously died, fighting to the end.

On the same platform with the eager "Americanization worker" sat Count Tolstoi, a cultured gentleman, the son of that gallant old Leo Tolstoi, pilgrim for truth, addressing the nondescript mass of Russian workmen as *bratri.*

Side by side with the stars and stripes we saw the red, blue, and white of Slavdom.

All this and much more we saw and heard, and were more determined than ever that these newly-discovered people in our midst should glorify America—small matter whether they really knew her or not; we did not know her very well ourselves. But we had slogans to give them and flags and English lessons and rallies and bonds to sell and altogether we were all as mad as March hares and even madder.

Do you remember the tea-party that Alice had with the March Hare and the Hatter?[1] They kept moving around the table using all the clean teacups with no time in between to wash up, because the Hatter's watch always said six o'clock, which was always tea-time. Well, our "Americanization of foreigners" was a sort of mad tea-party at which

[1] *Alice in Wonderland.* Lewis Carroll. If you do not know "Alice," you should borrow her from your library and read about her.

we used the same teacups over and over, and since it was always tea-time,—or Americanization time,—we began to get a little fed up with it and did all manner of stupid things. If you remember *Alice in Wonderland,* you will recall that the last Alice saw of the party, the Hatter and the March Hare were trying to put the Dormouse into the teapot. Like Alice, a lot of good English-speaking Americans vowed they would never go to an Americanization party again, and like Alice they said, "It's the stupidest party I ever was at in all my life."

But some felt that there might be Americanization parties that would not be stupid if only they could make themselves understood by these Slavic people, who, in spite of mean and sordid surroundings, were yet trying to fill life with things other than cheap saloons and movies. Being neighborly seemed a complicated business.

Where should they start to make the foreign man or woman feel a little friendliness in the new country? So many of the Slavic groups had been here for so long that they were well established in their mode of living; they had gone alone through some of the early stages of adjustment to a strange life and now were almost accustomed to being ignored in civic and national life. It was not an easy problem that faced the interested American who had become alive to the fact that he had been a very bad neighbor.

In spite of our indifference or ignorance of ways

in which to be helpful, the immigrant has been a true pioneer and often has got along by his wits. There is a true story told by an immigrant who had to undertake his first journey alone from the port of entry to his destination in Oklahoma, of how he faced the difficulties of a strange language. Like Jan, he had picked up a few English expressions on the trip across the ocean, one of which was "all right." He tells the story as follows:

"I had earnestly and honestly desired to learn English. Even while on the steamer I heard the words 'all right' more than nine hundred and ninety-nine times daily. As soon as I caught on to their pronunciation I began to say the words and immediately learned to use them correctly.

"Upon arriving on American soil I was examined by an officer. I asked him respectfully, 'All right?' to which he replied, 'All right.' In the front hall where my fellow countrymen waited for me, someone stepped on my corn and murmured something. Again I said, 'All right,' much to the amazement of my fellow countrymen. When I stepped on the platform I saw many trains there. I showed my ticket to one of the guards and after examining it carefully, he pointed in the direction in which I was to go. I thanked him with, 'All right,' and he also replied, 'All right.'

"I finally reached Chicago. The station was very crowded, and I leaned against the back of a baggage transfer truck and lighted my last cigar. All of

a sudden I heard someone calling out in warning tones, 'All right?' I leaped to one side, crying out, 'All right,' and at once two Negroes pushed a cart up to the place where I had been standing.

"Whenever I found it necessary to cross the street, I waited until the policeman called, 'All right!' After saying, 'All right,' about a hundred times en route, I finally arrived safely at the home of my uncle. After supper my uncle asked in my native Czech language how I enjoyed my trip. I replied, 'All right,' whereupon my uncle nearly fell over with amazement. Then he tapped me on the shoulder and said, 'You're all right!' " [1]

In some such fashion people do reach their destinations just as intrepid Americans spend their summers wandering around Europe making holes in the air with their hands to get what they want, whether it be fried eggs or hot baths. However, the average degree of linguistic patience and intelligence is considerably higher abroad than it is in our own land. Usually our only ingenuity in trying to make someone understand consists in shouting in a loud voice, as if noisy syllables could more easily penetrate a person's understanding than soft-spoken ones.

The size of our country is no small factor in the adjustment of newcomers. Its very largeness sometimes seems to create discomfort, for it seems so indefinite and ungraspable. It is this largeness of

[1] From *The Interpreter,* Foreign Language Information Service.

body that sometimes makes for unbelief and disappointment in the beginning. So the immigrant families that settle in Pittsburgh, thinking they can continue their neighborly contacts with the families from their village that settled in Chicago, feel for a time cheated.

The language is a still greater stumbling-block. In the bilingual and often trilingual countries of the Slavs, where often every street sign is posted in two or three languages, the matter of language was an old story. One made oneself understood in one of several if necessary. But here in this new and comical land, people stupidly enough speak but one language, and that one in no wise intelligible to the man who at home could speak in three or four languages.

Here we have often acted as if the languages of the newcomers were a drawback—certainly not an asset. At the same time we establish modern language departments in our public schools and, in some one of the several languages that our Slavic friends have been brought up on, nearly break our heads learning to say "Please pass me the bread," or "The sister of my brother's professor sits in the garden and knits." We are a wonderfully inconsistent people.

Gradually the men pioneers pick up the new and difficult speech that is so much harder to read than to speak. The "boss," by frequent and often angry repetition, makes it necessary to understand Eng-

lish, and gradually a vocabulary is built up. The children pick up the language here and there, as youngsters will the world over. But the mothers and women who must stay at home struggling to maintain some kind of a home in this populated wilderness, learn little if any of the new speech. Many women of foreign birth who have been thirty or forty years in this country still cannot speak English. This seems strange; but it is true.

Because new adjustments are so difficult, people from other countries attempt to keep as many of their native customs and habits as possible. Very often whole groups of one nationality settle together and form a community of their own. In some large cities these foreign communities grow into large colonies where the stores, newspapers, doctors, churches, and even schools are all of one nationality.

In the United States the number of such Slavic communities is very large. The life of these foreign communities is a strange mixture of Old World and New World life. American holidays and Russian church festivals are celebrated side by side. The band composed of Czech workmen from the steel mills is led by the owner of a flourishing little tailor shop. The editor of the leading Slovak daily is a member of the town council and a playground commissioner. His home is in the heart of the Slovak community, but his daughter is an attractive American high-school girl.

Here the signs over the shop doors are in the

Slavic tongues; the breads in the windows of the bakeries are unlike American bread; meats are differently prepared to suit Old World appetites, and odd frosted cakes sit side by side with the slangy, tinfoiled sweetmeats of American manufacture. It is somehow hard to imagine a Slavic "Gee-whiz" factory or a "Love-nest" confectioner. But the children, and grown-ups too, take very readily to the peculiarly American sweet fantasies; the penny ice-cream man is always surrounded by a swarm of sweet-seeking little folks in any foreign quarter.

Sometimes it is difficult to procure the kinds of food that one has been used to in the Old Country; or what is more likely, the enterprising storekeeper urges upon the housewife the excellently canned products of his shop.

As one goes from foreign community to foreign community in our industrial cities, there are few evidences of the picturesque villages from which most of these Slavic people came. Yet even at the gates of the factory, towering among the tall chimneys and flat red brick surfaces of the factory tenements, we find inevitably the Slavic churches. Here are the onion towers of the Orthodox Slavs, there the slender spires of the Catholic, both enriched and adorned to the extent of the parish's ability.

Within these dim churches it is hard to believe that we are in America. The great Russian basses are an organ accompaniment for the singing of

the choir. In Orthodox churches all singing is unaccompanied by any instrument and often the singing is beautiful beyond description. There is no such singing in our Protestant churches. The people kneeling on the stone floor seem untouched for the moment by the industrial struggle in which they are living. They might still be returning to their little painted cottages after the service.

The bulbous towers of the Russian Orthodox church.

His religion is such an inseparable part of his life that the Slavic immigrant clings to it when he first comes to this country as something familiar and unchanging. His priest and his church make an effort to help him in the maze of new difficulties and for a while they are all he has to turn to. His children are sent to the church school in addition to the English school, in order not to forget their own language and traditions. It is often pathetic to see the pride of the priest as he watches the progress of his lively youngsters and his concern when he sees them drifting further and further away from Old World customs and language.

A fine young Russian priest once said to me: "I tell the boys and girls that to be good Americans they must first be good Russians, and to let go the

good things of our culture is to have less to give to their new country. They must not ask everything and offer nothing."

In the old home, lack of sanitation in household arrangements was partly offset by plenty of fresh air and an open-air life in the fields. In America, where so many of these peasant people come to make their way in our most crowded centers of population, a healthy life can be lived only by the use of modern sanitary conveniences. But this is a fact which we have seemed to ignore and the average dwelling-places that we have built and offered to the people who come to do our "dirty work" are for the most part shamefully inadequate. The old cottage at home was crowded, but at least the family was able to maintain a sort of family life that is most difficult in the mill tenement.

The cottage doorstep and the village well are replaced by a dirty hallway and the corner grocery store. There are no geese for the children to tend, but instead they somehow carry the younger sisters and brothers about the crowded streets as they try to find a place to play. The old friendliness among neighbors is gone and suspicion and loneliness take its place.

Work at home was no easy matter, but here it becomes a grinding machine that wears down the sturdy frame of the peasant family. And yet the majority of these Slavic people remain in the new home, or they return to their own countries only to

be dissatisfied and discontented until they are back again in the restless life of America. Who shall say whether it is a question of the money that can be earned or the excitement and change that a crowded city brings into the lives of village persons that lures them back?

Perhaps you would like to know where some of these Slavic communities are found and what kinds of work these Slavic farmer folk go into when they come here. Let us consider a few bread-and-butter facts about the different families of Slavs as we know them in the United States.

The Poles are the most numerous of the Slavs in our country. There are about two millions of them, scattered for the most part in the North Atlantic and North Central states. The majority are unskilled laborers and for this reason are found doing heavy work in factories and mines. But they are also found in nearly every important industry, especially in clothing and cigar factories, textile mills, leather goods and packing houses. They are very industrious and thrifty, and they make good citizens, for they appreciate independence. They are an extremely religious people and often the Polish Roman Catholic Church in a community is the largest and most imposing of the city's churches. As a rule they are very much under the influence of their priest, and if he does not happen to be friendly to American institutions or customs, they cannot

take part in them. This fact sometimes makes them more isolated and lonely in this country than they might otherwise be. Pittsburgh and Chicago are great Polish centers among our larger cities, although there are many smaller places which are predominantly Polish.

The Czechs are among the oldest immigrants in the United States, for they have been coming to us steadily since 1853. There are about 250,000 Czechs in the United States. Chicago alone claims about 180,000 of this number, and New York and Cleveland have large colonies. The rest are scattered over the country, the majority being found in Nebraska, Iowa, Texas, and Minnesota.

In these states most of the Czechs are farmers and are usually prosperous and well-to-do. More than any of the other Slavs, they are found in all the trades and professions. The pearl button industry in this country, for example, is almost entirely in the hands of Czechs. These skilled button-makers came to this country many years ago because of economic difficulties in their own country. They started with tiny shops which have grown into large factories. The workmen have made clever inventions for cutting and polishing the shell from which the buttons are made, and today they practically control every article made of pearl in the country. Many of our college faculties have Czech members and great numbers become teachers. A

passion for education is one of their outstanding characteristics. Illiteracy is practically unknown in their own country, and this is largely due to Komensky, or Comenius. He established a system of public school education in his country before 1600, and the Czech people have never allowed it to decline. The University of Prague is one of the oldest institutions of learning in Europe and has been an important factor in Czech national life since its founding in 1348. This is a record in education that we in America may well envy, and a tradition that we might well follow.

Of the organizations and life of the Czechs in the United States, we will speak later. In this chapter we must content ourselves with trying to place the different Slavs who live in our country.

The Slovaks, who, as you remember, form a part of the new Republic of Czechoslovakia, number about 331,000 in the United States. The Slovak, who almost without exception is a farmer at home, is seldom found engaged in farming in this country. Because so many are illiterate peasants, it is difficult for them to procure any but the hardest sort of labor, and so we find the majority of them in our mines and steel mills. It is said that practically all of the heaviest manual labor in Pennsylvania and Ohio is done by Slovaks. It is in the sections where this sort of work is to be found that the Slovaks go.

They are a restless group and are always on the move. Many a Slovak has crossed back and forth between his own country and ours many times. After a while, however, he finds that he is happier in the United States than in the Old Country, and usually settles here for good. Slovak villages that have no returned emigrants are, however, rare and it is too often true that the returned wanderer has picked up a thin smattering of American ways which make him quite unbearable in his home village.

The kind of American life the immigrant has experienced during his stay with us is usually responsible for what he takes home with him. I have known returned emigrants who were the means of enriching the whole life of the home village. I am thinking of Anna Bohačková, who took back with her from her six years in the United States an entirely new spirit which she was able to give to the women of her village. She gave lessons in canning vegetables and fruits, a process few peasants know about, for they dry the vegetables for the most part; she encouraged the women to save the passing peasant arts of embroidery and painted decoration. This latter undertaking has become a real project, and not only gives the women a business to handle, but helps their appreciation of their own handicrafts as well, for with the increase of machine-made goods, peasant arts are in great danger of dying out.

The Jugoslavs or Southeast Slavs, who, as you remember, are made up of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, number about 400,000 in the United States: Serbs, 65,000; Croats, 250,000; Slovenes, 100,000. Like the Slovaks, they have a high percentage of illiteracy, and so are forced into the harder sorts of unskilled labor. They too are found mostly in the mining and steel centers of the eastern and north-central region. There are also large numbers of Croats and Serbs on the Pacific Coast. Their living conditions are often worse than those of any of the other Slavs. They are usually found in the isolated colonies and are even less known to English-speaking citizens than their other Slavic neighbors.

The upheaval in Russia following the revolution has sent large numbers of educated Russians to our shores. It is estimated that there are about 8,000 of these Russians living today mostly in New York City and San Francisco. These people, who have lost all their worldly possessions and who have been reduced to utter poverty in the long period of exile from their country, are hunting and accepting all manner of ways to earn a livelihood. It is not at all uncommon in the eastern part of the country to find generals, counts, and princes engaged as paperhangers, painters, waiters, or common laborers. "To the one who should be found to have 'the most unusual and original occupation,' a company of these Russians recently offered a prize

in the form of a Russian doll. The prize went to a former county prosecutor who is now employed in a local amusement resort 'to stimulate the appetite of a trained snake.' His duty is to hold before the snake a mouse tied to a string, the sight of which makes the serpent hungry, active, and ready to perform!" [1] It is a pitiful but stark fact that the educated, cultured foreigner has little chance to earn a living in America unless he has a good command of English.

A former court musician, a well-known leader of an orchestra, at the age of fifty is finding all his music and culture, his proficiency in German, French, and several Slavic languages of no economic value to him in the United States. At fifty, it is not easy to learn English.

These Russians have come to us because of extraordinary circumstances. But the average Russian immigrants who came to the United States before the World War were, like the Slovaks and Jugoslavs, peasants, for the most part from primitive surroundings. The condition of these people in America has been, and is, more miserable than almost any of our other immigrants. Because of the almost unremitting oppression at home, they have accepted unquestioningly the worst that America has to offer and have done the meanest of the mean work in connection with our gigantic man-eating industries.

[1] *The Interpreter*, August, 1924.

Of these Russian immigrants, not counting the Carpatho-Russians and the Russian Jews, there are about 200,000. Of this number it is estimated that twenty-five per cent are Great Russians (coming from Central Russia), forty per cent are White Russians (from Eastern Russia), and thirty-five per cent are Little Russians (Ukrainians from Russia).[1]

They are found also in the mining and steel districts, where they live lonely, dull lives. In the Middle West and in some parts of Canada, however, there are groups of Russians belonging to certain religious sects, whose living conditions are a little less hard and unhappy; in fact these communities are often prosperous and thriving.

There again we have ignored a people whose sufferings in their own country have not found relief in ours. Here they have found discouragement and unfriendliness. The times when we have held out our hands as neighbors and well-wishers have

[1] The figures given in the foregoing paragraphs are based on the estimates provided by the Foreign Language Information Service of the numbers of foreign-born persons in the United States. Statistics that include both foreign-born and American-born members of the various Slavic groups in the United States are as follows:

The first four groups are estimated only; the remainder are census figures.

Russians	400,000	Slovaks	619,866
Ukrainians	300,000	Serbs	52,208
Poles	3,500,000	Croats	140,559
Lusatian Serbs	5,000	Slovenes	208,552
Czechs	622,796	Bulgarians	14,420

Total, 5,863,401

been few. Small wonder that we have become worried about the problem of the foreigner in our midst!

A Russian professor at Yale has written something about the Russian immigrant which seems to me to apply to us and all our Slavic fellow citizens:

"America does not want discouraged and dissatisfied workmen, does not want men unacquainted with the advantages of freedom in a civilized country and with the responsibilities of free citizens. No coercive measures, no restrictions, no isolating, no punishments, no propaganda can make of foreign workmen useful members of the community. This can be accomplished only by education, by example, by patience, by mutual respect, and by confidence in the democratic principle of public service." [1]

That would be quite a task for you young folks to tackle if you cared to do it, to acquaint foreign-born people in our country with "the advantages of freedom in a civilized country."

But we are always to remind ourselves that the other half of giving is receiving and that we cannot know a friend without making ourselves known.

In the next chapter we shall try to find out more about what Slavs in the United States are doing and thinking, and why we need to know one another better.

[1] Report of the Russian Collegiate Institute of New York. Quoted in *Foreigners or Friends.*

THE NEED FOR THINGS FAMILIAR

If the chamois would not jump, he would not break his legs.

A Polish proverb

Slovak pottery.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Need for Things Familiar

It is the most natural thing in the world that people who share some common experiences and customs should group themselves together. At least they feel the need for touching things familiar until the feel of the new surroundings becomes natural. This is true not only of a Pole who seeks a Polish community or a Serbian seeking a Serbian colony upon coming to the United States, but it is also true of groups of people everywhere.

Have you ever found yourself in a totally strange place, such as a school away from home where you had not even a nodding acquaintance with a soul? Then, of a sudden, appeared someone from your school back home, someone you had never known very well, or even liked very well. Yet because you were both strangers in a strange place, you stuck together like chums all day, comforted by the mere fact of having had a common experience, of speak-

ing the "same language." It is this feeling that brings about, oddly enough, "Iowa Picnics" at Long Beach, California, or "Massachusetts Day" at a World's Fair in San Francisco.

When the strange place becomes less strange and you make new acquaintances, you may discover more congenial companions than the chap from your old school. The need for things familiar has been filled by making new things familiar, and while your loyalty to the old place and old friends is as staunch as ever, you are engrossed in things in which you are really interested—a debating society, for example, or an orchestra, or a hiking club. In these groups you gradually feel very much at home because all of the young people in them are interested in debating, or camping, or music, irrespective of where they came from.

It is largely this same feeling that causes the formation of the foreign communities of which we were talking in Chapter Four. But the period of getting acquainted when you are a foreigner in America is far longer and lonelier than when you are a former pupil at Shelbyville entering "prep" school at Williamsburg.

No immigrant really expects Americans to say "Good day!" on the morning of his arrival, but when he finds no move on the part of the older resident to shake his hand, he has no intention of sitting down and waiting to be invited to dinner. Not he!

Gradually, as the groups of Poles or Slovaks or Russians become larger, they get together and try to reconstruct as much of the old life as possible. In this chapter we shall learn about some of the organizations and activities of these energetic people.

It has often been said that Americans love to organize, that six of them cannot meet to discuss the possibilities of rain tomorrow without appointing a chairman and a secretary and a sub-committee. But the Slavs are not far behind them, for our Slavic communities all over the country are rich in organizations. Some of their organized activities are athletic or gymnastic, musical, national, and religious organizations.

There is one organization that is common to all the Slavic groups, though it is most characteristic of the Czechs. This is the *Sokol,* a "brotherhood founded upon national instincts and which comprises the cultivation of self-government, a homely democracy, and voluntary discipline, together with healthy living conditions, physical beauty, and rhythmic gymnastic exercise." [1]

"Sokol" means falcon, which is a very appropriate symbol for such an organization—free, swift, sure, intelligent as a falcon is, keen-eyed and unerring in his flight. His uniform is a Sokol's just pride. The coat and trousers are fawn-colored, the simple shirt, turkey-red. He wears high black boots and

[1] *Foreigners or Friends.* Thomas Burgess. Page 106.

a round visorless cap—black with a red top and a falcon's feather stuck in the front of the cap under the Sokol emblem. He looks very trim and jaunty indeed with the jacket worn over one shoulder, hussar fashion, and the cap tilted ever so slightly.

The Sokol.

When a great gathering of Sokols is held in Europe, members from all the Slavic countries where they flourish come together in a brilliant spectacle of harmonious physical movement. Such a gathering is called a *slét* which means "The flying of the Falcons." The first *slét* held after the War was in Prague, the capital of Czechoslovakia, in 1920. On the enormous parade-ground appeared twelve thousand gymnasts at one time, doing the same rhythmic exercises, so that the field of Sokols was not unlike the swift sure flight of falcons.

At the time of the revolution in Czechoslovakia, in 1918, it was the Sokols who appeared suddenly all over the country and conducted a bloodless, orderly revolution. All offices and all the work of the Sokol organization are carried voluntarily;

no one receives salary or pay of any kind. A Sokol badge abroad is a guarantee of courtesy and honesty.

In the United States the Sokol organization has not sprung up from an imperative political need as it did abroad. But it fills an important place in the lives of the Slavs in America.

Singing societies are formed principally among the Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, and Russians. Music to a Slav is not an accomplishment; it is a necessity. If we learn nothing else from these fellow adventurers in democracy, may we learn from them the uses and joys of music. They sing because they cannot help it and because music is to them a state of soul, an expression of life. In the village homes they sang as they worked or as they rested. Even the sophisticated boys and girls of the cities keep close to the land by singing the songs of the people.

In Russia the *chastoushki* or working-men's ditties are a real form of self entertainment, and, rough and coarse as they sometimes are, they come from the harshness of life as they know it and bring both laughter and tears. These village songs are often accompaniments to dances. Instead of whirling stupidly around, letting a jazz orchestra supply the rhythm and cadence for movement, village dancers themselves produce the rhythm by singing, clapping of hands, stamping of feet, and acting out the story of the song.

How much more exciting than a one-step is a *czardaš* or a *beseda* when properly and spiritedly danced! But in the close atmosphere of a national hall with the noise of automobiles and the screeching life of the city without, the *czardaš* is apt to become a farce and the *beseda* a spiritless failure. Grown people lose the art of play in industrial communities, and all the national halls and playgrounds in the world fail to recapture the abandon of the village street dance or the field festivals at harvest time.

The boys and girls of Slavic parents are often ashamed to try to dance the folk dances. They would rather do the dull steps of American dances, because they are American. An evening spent at a Polish dance in a Polish community is sometimes a confused combination of the older folks dancing a spirited polka and the young folks bumping into them as they walk around in a colorless one-step—all to the same music. But to dance the polka European fashion requires skill and excellent equilibrium, otherwise one retires from the rapid, continuous whirl crying with a certain small boy become dizzy with whirling, "Put the floor down, put the floor down!"

It is in movements like the Sokol and the singing unions that Slavs find the greatest recreational appeal, rather than in some of the provisions that we have often made for their recreation. Perhaps we could learn from them a more acceptable form

of recreation for our American-born people. At any rate, they deserve our sympathy and interest in this organized recreation, and not our efforts to remake their community gatherings into typically American affairs.

There are several large national societies flourishing among the Slavs in the United States. Some of them, like the Polish National Alliance and the Czech National Alliance and the Slovak League grew up from a desire to work for the liberation of their own countries. This leads us to think that in spite of misery, hardship, and loneliness in this new land, the Slavs must have caught a glimpse of what freedom can mean. These national alliances have been very helpful in aiding the patriots back home, and a great deal of money was given in an unselfish

"Chastoushki." The village street is made for dancing.

spirit to aid the struggle for independence in the different countries abroad.

As soon as Poland and Czechoslovakia gained their independence at the close of the War, there was a marked decrease in nationalistic feeling among the Slavs in this country. They felt, for the most part, that they had done their duty gladly toward the countries of their birth, but after all they were now Americans and as Americans their first concern was for this country.

More and more as we draw these newer citizens into our civic and national life such alliances will lose their importance. However, at the present time they largely supply a lack for which we have failed to provide; namely, educational opportunities, insurance, and self-help opportunities for the brand new immigrant.

It is wrong to fear societies such as these, just as it is foolish to cry out against the foreign-language newspapers in the United States. Both are means of communicating to the immigrant who cannot understand English even though he "speaks enough to get along." The leaders of both are educated people who know what American ideals are, in substance, and who use their own familiar language to interpret America to their countrymen. It is through leaders of this sort that our foreign-born peoples will find America, and when they have found her, they may discover some of her real beauties which are hidden from others.

By far the most important institution among the Slavs, both in the old home and in the new land, is the Church. In Chapter Three we tried to make clear a few points in regard to religion and the Slavs, the kinds of churches they attended and what part religion plays in their lives. When they come to us there is no reason why they should feel differently about their church. In fact, there is every reason why it should fill an even greater place in their lives, for with the increased loneliness and trouble of getting used to the ways of a strange country, they need their religion more than ever.

In many cases the Slavic churches do provide spiritual guidance and material assistance to their members in this country. Every effort has been made by the Roman Catholic Church to continue her service to the immigrants from Roman Catholic countries and to maintain their loyalty. The Orthodox Church likewise has done her best to provide clergy and churches for her people. The lives of many of these devoted priests are filled with sacrifice for the simple grown children they serve.

But there are all too many immigrants who grow away entirely from the Old World churches when they come to this country. Real or imagined oppressions cause them to refuse religion of all kinds and to fall into an indifference that is in some ways peculiar to our age.

It is to these people who find no happiness in their own churches and who refuse to return to

them that we ought to be able to offer service. In the last chapter will be shown some of the work that American churches have been able to do and some of the ways in which we should prove helpful through them.

The Slavic immigrants grow away not only from what has been their dearest and most precious possession in the Old Country—their religion—but from another possession equally precious—their mothers and fathers.

It is much easier to change your ways of living when you are young than it is later, as you know. If you were taken abroad for several years with your parents when you were a youngster, it would not be long before you would pick up the language of the country in which you were living. You would go to school and learn to do your studying very much as all the other boys and girls do. You would soon be interpreting the language for your mother when you went downtown with her and would read the papers to your father who would learn his way about in the strange language ever so much more slowly than you. You would pick up the slang expressions in no time. And so armed with the defense of speech, it would not be long before you would feel quite at home.

When boys and girls of Slavic families settle in the United States they go through much the same experience. If they are young enough, they enter our public schools. In places where the foreign

communities are not large, this is sometimes a painful business; for children can be very cruel toward someone who seems different. But usually the schools into which the younger ones go are so used to having pupils of many nationalities that no one thinks much about it. The teachers are trained to understand the newcomer, and it is not long before the young Slovak or Czech or Croat, or whatever he may be, is feeling at home. He learns rapidly and shows off his knowledge at home. He is likely to imitate the bad manners of the boys he plays with at school and be "smart" at home. Soon his very clothes are the same as those of the boys he plays with, for ready-made clothing is much cheaper and easier to procure in our country than it was in his isolated village.

The older boys and girls, of from fourteen to eighteen, have a harder time. Almost invariably they go to work in mines or factories where there are no laws to prevent the labor of children under sixteen, and they are often found working many hours a day under fearfully hard conditions. It is sadly enough true that many immigrant families are strongly opposed to child-labor laws because the enforcement of these laws means less income for the family, but for the good of our future citizens we must work for the abolition of this kind of labor.

These older Slavic boys and girls are quick to pick up English in the places where they work. Because

their fellow workers laugh at them if they wear Old-Country clothes, they try to possess American ones as soon as possible. The girls are soon doing their hair in American styles, and the boys learn the swaggering ways of the city.

It is not strange that the parents look at these changes with alarm. The freedom of young people in America is quite appalling to them, and they are hurt and angry that their children should expect such liberty. They are used to utmost obedience and respect from their children until they are married at least. The world seems topsy-turvy indeed when they cannot keep track of their fourteen- and fifteen-year-old sons and daughters.

As a rule, the living quarters of the family are small and cramped. The young daughter has little room to guard her precious new finery from the boisterous younger brothers and sisters. All the members of the family are working under strange and difficult conditions; the noise and restlessness of the industrial community get onto their nerves and make it easier to be cross and irritable.

The quiet family meal-times are gone; even the old "grace" before meals is often omitted in the hurry to get to work on time or to go to the movies at night. Gradually the space between the parents, who are not so easily affected by the restless new life, and the young folks widens. Sitting around at home seems dull indeed compared to the brightly-lighted streets, the movies, dances, and amusement

parks. Home is too small and unattractive to bring friends to, so there you are—what can be done about it?

Many of the young people become interested in night school and work hard to improve their English, to learn stenography, typewriting, or other subjects. This is especially true of the young Czechs, who are always on the lookout for improvement, and hundreds of them are found among the teachers in the schools and colleges of the United States. Sometimes they change their names a little to make them easier for American tongues. Jiři Keřpinsky, for instance, (pronounced approximately Yeerzhee Kzhepinsky) might simplify his name to George Repinsky. This is hard on the parents, who dislike such changes. Later their own language becomes so interspersed with English words that it is hardly understood by real Slavs. They forget the songs and dances and religious customs of their own land to a great degree.

Meanwhile, they have had little opportunity to know American-born young people. These superior young folks still think them queer and foreign and seldom include them in their parties or organizations. And so this great group of young Slavic people, most of whom are citizens through their fathers' citizenship, as Jan Markovič was, or who later will become citizens in their own right, are like Jan in wanting to become Americans. You remember Jan's puzzlement over what constituted

a real American? This question puzzles lots of these young people too. Why should they be left outside?

But what is it they are outside of? Have we any greater assurance of getting joy out of life than they, or any magic formula for life that others should envy? I think not.

Many of our churches have been turning over this question in their minds for several years—how to be helpful and neighborly to the foreign-born citizen without seeming meddlesome or condescending. Sometimes it has been the young people's societies which have been able to make the first move, or the Sunday-school classes.

Many churches have adopted the motto, "For every American, a foreign-born friend," and what it would mean to all of us if we carried out this ideal!

For many years the home missionary societies of the various churches have been trying to make a friendly road down which we may all walk together. Many churches have organized centers in which recreation and English classes are provided for foreign-born people. There are also clubs of various kinds existing under the different churches and settlement houses, a few clinics where health examinations are given and medical service is rendered. Several of the Protestant denominations have established missions in Slavic mining communities and among other Slavic groups, where the

minister in charge is also a Slav and can serve his people in their own language. The Catholic Church has long been aware of the necessity of keeping in touch with its new members in this country, but sometimes its sincere efforts to serve its people have resulted in even greater segregation of foreign communities. What we need is greater knowledge of each other, more opportunities for offering friendship to one another.

The Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. are also greatly concerned over this need. As far back as 1911 the Y.W.C.A. developed a department to work with foreign-born women and established its first International Institute. This is a Y.W.C.A. which employs women of different nationalities who can approach foreign-born women in their own language, offering service and friendliness to them. Through these International Institutes women and girls have been given English lessons, legal assistance, health lessons, and help with the cooking and household problems of the new country, opportunities for recreation, and a beginning of friendship with American women.

We know that a large proportion of the Slavic immigrants living in the United States, people who are essentially and deeply religious by nature, are without the fellowship of any church, either because they are not satisfied with what is offered or because there is no church of their own affiliation in their community. For the most part they belong

either to the Greek Orthodox Church, or to Protestant denominations—Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, and Lutheran principally. Many of these Slavs have followed the faith of Jan Hus and Martin Luther for generations and so are Protestant before they come here.

In spite of these facts, it is estimated that the combined work for foreign-born people of all evangelical churches in America consists of only 376 missions and churches with 34,500 members. In comparison to the 4,500,000 foreign-born Slavs in the United States this is not a large figure.

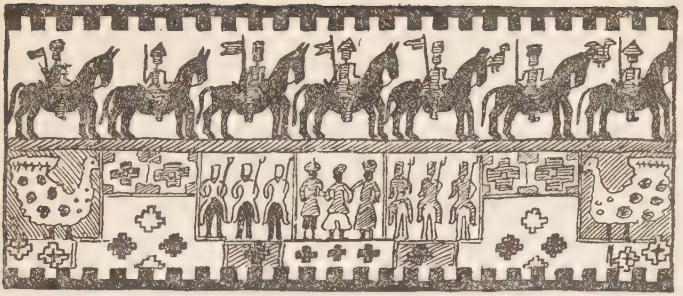
Such facts and figures as these, however, should not measure our ideal of our relation to the Slavic immigrant. We desire to help him find himself in America, not to make him a member of our church unless he has no church of his own. Our greatest joy can be in helping him to become a part of the community, a citizen of the nation. We may more readily do this by appreciating him in his own church or in his own home, by knowing why he celebrates a certain holiday and by asking him to take part in the ones we observe.

After all, there are no rules of conduct for us to follow in our contact with foreign-born people that are different from those we use towards anyone else. Patience and kindness with their use of a new language, courtesy toward them in all of our ordinary, everyday contacts with them will go a long way toward removing some of their loneliness.

YOUTH'S HIGH ADVENTURE

A fisherman sees another fisherman from afar.

A Russian proverb



A Ukrainian design.

CHAPTER SIX

Youth's High Adventure

By this time we have probably forgotten the date of the year in which Poland was cruelly divided up, but after all, that is an unessential thing to remember. We may begin the high adventure that awaits us as young citizens of our country without remembering any date at all. It would be ever so much kinder and ever so much more intelligent if we could remember some of the things about the Slavic peoples of whom we have been talking, instead of forgetting altogether some of the things that make them Slavs. But even that is not a life-and-death matter.

What really matters is our own realization that there is a big task ahead of us all; namely, to make our country a place where humanity is respected, where every person has an equal right with every other person to live a decent, clean, citizen's life.

It is a long trek that we have set out upon.

Longer than the Oregon trail that Jed followed in the covered wagons of '49, longer than the journey which Jan, the little Slovak emigrant, undertook with his mother, it lies unmistakably before us, disappearing in the far distance of our western horizon.

We shall have to ask our way from point to point as did Jan's family, or, even more adventurous than Jed, blaze a new trail through the modern wilderness of disbelief and indifference.

This is an adventure that we shall have to follow all our lives. We shall be in the midst of it in school, in our neighborhood, later on in our business or in our profession, and in our church life.

Perhaps some of you may have heard during the winter of 1923 a chorus of Czechoslovak children which sang in the United States. This chorus, called the Bakule Chorus, came to this country at the invitation of the Junior Red Cross in order to learn something of American life and to offer friendship to American boys and girls. All of the boys and girls of this group, which numbered about forty, were orphans, crippled or unfortunate in one way or another. Professor Bakule is a young Czech teacher who was so distressed at the thought of these unfortunate children that he started a small school in Prague, Czechoslovakia, where he taught them all sorts of useful and happy things. Handicrafts and practical lessons he taught, and among other things, they learned how to sing beautifully

and harmoniously together. No amount of sympathy and interest would account for the real enjoyment of one of their concerts. Professor Bakule believes that every slightest thing must be done well, and when that something is singing, which every Czech loves to do anyway, you can imagine how the songs of these boys and girls sounded.

This chorus traveled all over the United States, singing in schools, in churches, and in the Czech communities as well. If you had been able to go behind the scenes and talk to them, you would have been surprised, perhaps, to find how many of them already could speak some English. They had a real desire to know America and American boys and girls. They are being taught in their own country of Czechoslovakia that they are only a small part of a world that is very closely bound together, a world that cannot avoid working together even if it would. Therefore, they should enjoy working together and should stop bickering and fighting about it. This, I am convinced, is the ideal of the Czechoslovak Junior Red Cross. If you heard these young citizens of a young republic sing, you know how sincere they are.

So while the grown-ups are having a difficult time to make their organizations work together in affairs that concern us all so deeply, young folks all over the world are proving that it can be done if you start young enough.

Can you imagine a Boy Scout jamboree being a

jamboree if Scouts from all over the world were not taking part? Boy Scout uniforms are not exactly alike in any two countries, but their ideals are the same. Yet here in our church troop of Scouts we may not be willing to take in Jan Markovič or some other lad who is a newcomer, whose parents do not speak English very well, because he is a "foreigner" and different. Why cannot we begin to look for his "likenesses" instead of his "differences"?

I am really quite convinced that this is your big adventure and not that of the older folks. They have been stumbling around in this business of neighborliness for many years, some of them, but as I showed you in our last chapter, they have not gone so very far.

Splendid friendships have been made through some of the work our various churches have done, and a few entire communities have been given an opportunity for a religious life through the missions and churches established by our different denominations.

But our opportunity, perhaps, lies outside of all the good works established already. We were talking in Chapter Five about the boys and girls of Slavic parents who are growing up and are drifting away from their parents and from the things which still give great comfort to them in America. Why are not many of these boys and girls content to go to the churches where their mothers and fathers go? The reason is simply that they think these places

are un-American and queer; already they do not feel quite at home among a group of devout people who are still so obviously of the Old Country.

Where do they go to church, then? Where do they meet other boys and girls of their own age with whom they can carry on all the joyous nonsense that boys and girls all over the world have been engaging in since ever there were boys and girls? Too often the answers to these questions are: "No church at all!" and "The streets of the city!"

How about getting acquainted with some of these young people? In the first place, we shall have to discover if there are Slavic girls and boys in our city. Our Sunday-school teacher ought to be a good person to help us find out. It may be quite an adventure just to find out something about our city. We might make a real game of it and try making a map. We became so used to maps in Chapter Two that we ought to like them by this time.

In almost any stationery store or bookstore, the Chamber of Commerce, or City Hall, or Library, or any real estate office, we ought to be able to find a plan of our city or town as the case may be. We could then divide the city into sections and ask each member of our group to take a section to find out everything he can about that part of the city. That will mean that each of us will draw a map of our section and fill it in. This is great fun, I know, for I have done it often myself. A suggestion as to how

to do this will be found in the illustration on page 149.

Just for a beginning, suppose you find out what churches are in your section. Mark them on your map with different symbols so you will know what kinds of churches they are. Then if you remember some of the things we discussed when we talked of the Slavic churches, you ought to have an idea or two as to whether there are any Slavs in your section. For instance, you begin to take a look around your section and see down the street some queer onion towers like those on page 111. You will probably discover that they belong to an Orthodox Church, which means that Russians, Serbs, or Bulgarians live near at hand. Find out for certain whether it is a Russian, Serbian, or Bulgarian Orthodox Church and mark it on your map. Or the same bulbous towers may mean that the church is a "Uniat" church, which you will remember is a Greek Catholic church, and it may have Slovak as well as Ruthenian members.

While you are in the neighborhood of the church, see how much you can learn about the neighborhood. Are the grocery stores run by Russians or Serbians? How will you find out without seeming rude and inquisitive?

I have found that the storekeepers in foreign communities are almost always ready to talk with someone who seems really interested in their neighborhood. They often are leading members in the

life of their community. And, too, they are sure to know the people well, for many have "charge accounts," and those they know very well indeed.

If you show that you really wish some information about the people who trade at his store, the storekeeper will give you a good start even if you are a young person.

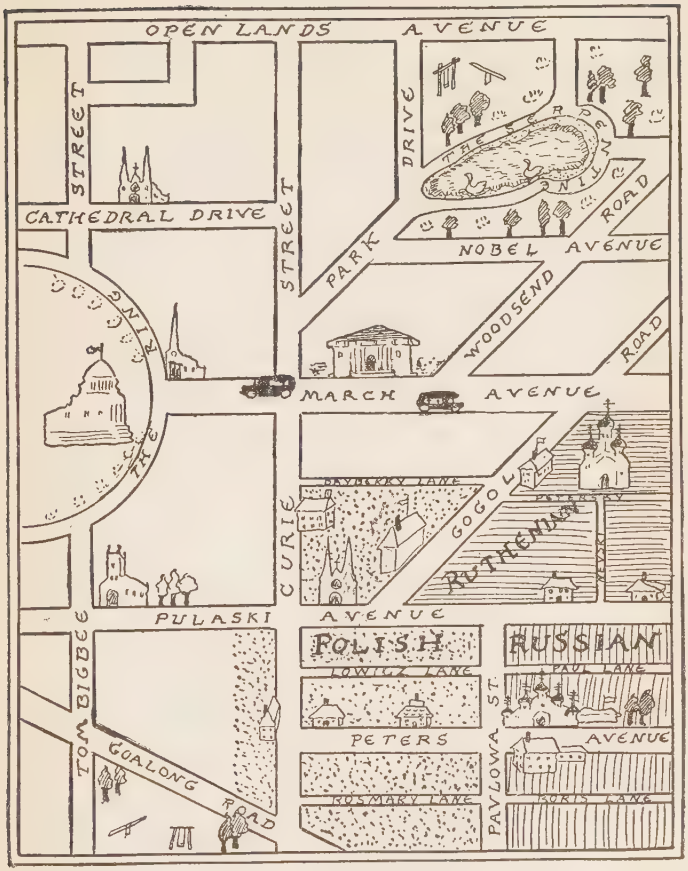
If your eyes are keen, you will find newspapers displayed in this neighborhood, written in a language strange to you. With the help of your teacher or by a little study at the library, you can soon become familiar enough with the appearance of Slavic languages to distinguish one from the other. It will be quite a lark to see how much you can find out all by yourself. It will be like finding a blazed trail through a forest—you have often done that at camp, I am sure.

If there is a library in your section, or even in the part of your town or city where you think most of the foreign communities may be found, go straight to the head librarian and ask for the information you wish. Some libraries, notably in a city with a large foreign-born population like Cleveland, and in a smaller one like Passaic, New Jersey, of whose population eighty per cent are foreign-born, are especially valuable because of their contact with foreign communities. Passaic, for instance, like a few other industrial cities, has a beautiful library in the center of its foreign section which is used in every possible way by the many

nationalities living in its neighborhood. Large collections of books in foreign languages are on its shelves, as well as books in English. Educational programs, entertainments, and lectures are given in the evenings, and they are always well attended by the neighbors. A sincere effort has been made by native-born Americans to make these evenings a common meeting-place, and by placing the responsibility of some of them on foreign-born groups, they themselves share the experience of getting acquainted.

This leads us to the real secret of success in our big adventure. No matter how many maps we make, or how many facts we gather about the Slavs living in the section allotted to us, if we are not ready to accept friendship as well as to offer it, we may as well give up all idea of being pioneers.

But let us go on with our map. After we have located all the churches in our section and have found out whether they are Polish Roman Catholic, Slovak Roman Catholic, Croatian Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Russian Orthodox, Moravian Brethren, Slovak Congregational, Czech Baptist, or whatever they are, what next? Let us see if we can find any parochial schools which, as a rule, will be present in connection with the churches. Let us put them on the map. Are there any national halls in our section? Or any theaters? Most often the national halls are used for meetings of all kinds—dances, dramatics, and concerts.



What does your neighborhood look like?

Can we find any foreign-language newspaper offices? I made my first acquaintance with Slavic people many years ago sitting on a high stool in the office of a Slovak editor in a mill-town in New Jersey. I wanted to know about Slovaks in that town and simply went in and told a busy little man whom I found in the shop what I wanted. So he sat on another high stool and drew maps on a blotter for me. He gave me first a picture of Slovakia in Europe and then a picture of Slovaks in America. I was very much thrilled at the patience and care which he took to tell a youngster like me all these interesting things. Besides, he had had an exciting personal history which I came in time to know. Later I became acquainted with his handsome young wife and baby girl, and I still hear from them occasionally.

Let us put the public schools of our section on the map, too, and the playgrounds, if there are any; also any settlement houses and public health clinics that there may be. You will find out such a lot about your city before you are through with this undertaking!

Of course, every city or town is different in many ways, and your way of finding out about it will have to be your own way. These are only a few suggestions which you may want to use in order to make a beginning.

After you have done all you can with the help and advice of some older person, put all your map sec-

tions together and see how much your whole group has discovered about the place in which you live. It may be that in your whole town you have found no Slavic group, but it will be strange indeed if this is so.

When you have become familiar with the sections in which you have found Slavs living, ask the leader of your group—Boy Scouts, Sunday-school class, Girl Reserves, or whatever your group is—to take a few of you to one of the Slavic churches some Sunday. Do not go just for curiosity, but with a desire to see some of your neighbors at their best, and at the time when they are most wholly of the Old World. A church of any creed or nation is a house of God and you will find Him there if you take Him there in your own heart. The God of the Methodists is the same as the God of the Russian Orthodox people or Slovak Catholics; we simply address Him differently. Fortunately He is able to understand all tongues.

It is very possible that you will discover a club or a Boy Scout troop of Slavic boys at one of the settlement houses; or perhaps a group of Junior Sokols among the boys and girls of the Czechoslovak or Polish or Serbian community. If there are such groups of boys or girls organized in your town or city, why not arrange to invite them to a party at your parish house or place of meeting, and make an effort to get acquainted? Such groups as these will be just as "American" as you are, but

perhaps they will be glad to exchange courtesies with you and in time they may help you to know many more things about the Slavs from whom they come.

It may be that only one or two young Americans of Slavic parents can be found whom you can interest in your civic adventure. Keep in mind that you are not setting out on this quest merely to satisfy curiosity. With the help of one or two of these young folks you may be able to put some Slavic decoration, such as you find in this book, only in the gay colors that peasants use, in your classroom where your maps hang. It is quite possible that your new friends may have to turn to their parents for help in reconstructing some of the familiar designs on the little cottages in Europe. Or better still, you could make a table or a bench, and paint and decorate it in true Slavic peasant fashion.

Also it is possible to buy very gay-colored lithographs which show the variety of peasant costumes and customs. These narrow strips make excellent decoration when used as friezes in a room.[1]

In fact, there are many things that may be done to give interest and color to your study of your Slavic neighbors. Best of all, of course, is getting to know them personally and hearing from them their own folk history and legends. From them,

[1] These charming strips (12 x 31½ inches) may be purchased, two for 45 cents, from the Polish Book Importing Co., 38 Union Square, New York City.

too, you can learn their folk-songs. In fact, one very good way to show them that you really care to know Slavs in the United States is to learn some of the beautiful old songs such as those our old friend Jan sang to his guitar. Such a song is the Russian folk-song, "Little Birch Tree."

Little Birch Tree

Little birch tree growing in the meadow,
Curly leaved and growing in the meadow.

Chorus: Liulee, liulee, in the meadow,
Liulee, liulee, in the meadow.[1]

I'll go out a-walking in the meadow.
I will make three whistles in the meadow. *Chorus.*

I will take my singing *balalaika.*
Play a tune upon my *balalaika.* *Chorus.*

Rise my beloved from thy slumber,
Rise my beloved and awaken. *Chorus.*

Rise and pray before the holy icon.
Rise and pray before the holy icon. *Chorus.*

Rise and don thy shoes of russet leather,
Don the coat my hands have embroidered. *Chorus.*

Take my hand and come to the meadow.
Take my hand and come to the meadow. *Chorus.*

[1] The final phrase of the chorus is always the last part of the verse.

A comical dance song from Czechoslovakia is about a *sedliak.* A *sedliak,* you remember, is a farmer.

Sedliak, Sedliak, Sedliak
Struts like an old peacock;
Sedliak, Sedliak, Sedliak,
Of high estate.
Round about his waist a belt,
'Broidered on his coat of pelt
Tuli, tuli, tuli, tulips ornate.

O see! O see! O see!
How foolish he can be;
O see! O see! O see!
How foolish he!
To his field he rides astride,
Two watches wears with pride;
O see! O see! O see!
How foolish he!

Anyone would enjoy singing with Poles, "The Green Grove."

Little grove, green in spring,
You set people wondering.
Pretty girls, dress you now,
A red ribbon for each bough;
Now you come alive and green and good,
O'er the swaying bridge of linden-wood.

Winter's frost tried in vain
To destroy our roots and grain,
Now they're green. Now there go
Pacing pigeons to and fro.
Master and Mistress proudly saunter out,
Watching their thalers grow and roll about.

To their house if you came
They'd greet you in Jesus' name;
He in rich embroideries,
She with cap and jingling keys;
Both will surely have a gift for us;
They are rich and kind and generous.

But there are so many of these songs that you could spend weeks learning them and never finish. It is odd, too, how much you can learn about a people from its folk-songs.[1]

One summer when friends of mine were taking a long canoe trip in Canada, they had an experience which began with a folk-song and has ended with real friendship. They had set out across a large lake, having been told that there were some settlers on the other side of the lake who would take them in for the night.

They paddled through the stillness of that deeply-forested wilderness, watching the reflections of the tall trees swaying toward them as they

[1] One of the best books for use in such a venture as this is *Folk Songs of Many Peoples*, by Florence Hudson Botsford, Vol. I, $2.75. Womans Press, 600 Lexington Avenue, New York City. The above translations are from this book.

neared the shore. Suddenly they heard the strokes of an ax ringing across the water, and then a deep voice began to sing an old song of Russia.

> Many songs have I heard in my dear fatherland,
> And they filled me with sorrow and joy.

The travelers looked at each other in astonishment, for they recognized the song and the Russian language in which it was being sung. They had not been told that the settlers were Russians. As they grounded their canoe and stepped from it directly into a small clearing facing the lake, they saw a tall bearded man drop his ax and look toward them with astonishment. With the aid of German, the travelers were able to tell him who they were and to ask if they could spend the night in the log cabin.

There in the rude house set up in the continual shadow of the Canadian forest, the two wanderers met the woodman's wife, his two daughters, and two sons. In the old days in Russia they had been wealthy and happy. Political difficulties had made it necessary to emigrate, and, in order to find complete peace and strength, the father of the family had chosen to begin life all over again in the wilderness of Canada. The family had gone with him willingly enough for his sake, and they were now courageously facing the hardships of the severe winter, ill-prepared though they were for it.

The robustness of the older man showed that

he had found his health and peace of mind at least, but it was lonely business for them all. In the evenings the old people liked to sing the songs of old Russia, but the young people said, "No, let us not remember them. We have a new life to live, and they only bring us sad memories."

To that lonely family now go occasional gifts from the travelers' church in this country—books, phonograph records, letters, friendly things that take with them warm thoughts and help to make life in a new world heartening.

If friendships can be made and maintained in the isolation of the forests, surely we can build them up in our own parishes. It may be a chance folk-song that will open a door for us or help us to understand, where speech is unintelligible.

But do not think that all folk-songs are lovely, or that they are all melodious. Often they are very comical and even coarse, not unlike our "jazz" songs—which we hope will be so dead when we have become a very ancient nation, that there will be no danger of reviewing them as "early American folk-songs." But always the folk-songs are real and unadorned; therefore, they have lasted and become a part of the people from whom they sprang.

If you can sing with a people, you do not need to worry about being misunderstood. The Slavs are a singing race and if they can give some of their music and natural gift for singing to Americans, to whom singing, for the most part, is an accom-

plishment or a thing to be ashamed of, the more credit to them.

But all the suggestions that I might make to you would go in one ear and out the other if you have not decided already to begin your own high adventure of pioneering. No one can tell a pioneer just what to do and what not to do. All you need is a general direction and the fellowship of other pioneers, just as Jed and his family had on their way to Oregon, and Jan and his mother and brothers and sisters when they turned towards America.

Adventures are always mysteries, or else they would not be adventures, and sometimes they are life-long jobs. Making one citizenry of the peoples of the earth is not a matter that we can concentrate on for six weeks and then forget. It is a considerable task, and we cannot tackle it all alone. And since American-born people cannot do it alone, and Slavic-born people, or Italian-born, or any foreign-born people cannot do it alone, it certainly seems as if the sensible thing to do would be to get together.

So with our "banjo on our knee" let's begin our trek across the face of our nation and make a new youth-made trail towards a real democracy of the world.

GLOSSARY

Letters in parentheses indicate the following group origins: (C) Czechoslovak; (P) Polish; (R) Russian; (S) Slovak.

AMERIČANKA (S)	(Ä'měr-ĭ-chän-kä)	American woman
AMERIČAN (S)	(Ä'měr-ĭ-chän)	American man
ANDULA (C)	(än'doo-lä)	angel
ANO (C)	(ä'no)	yes
BALALAIKA (R)	(băl-ă-lyé'kä)	A Russian musical instrument
BABIČKA (C)	(bä'beetch-kä)	grandmother
BESEDA (C)	(bĕ'sĕ-dä)	Czech national dance
BRAMBOURY (C)	(bräm'boar-ee)	potatoes
BRATRI (R)	(brä'tree)	brothers
ČERT (C)	(chairt)	devil
CHASTOUSHKI (R)	(chäs-toush'kee)	working-men's ditties
CZARDAŠ (P)	(tchär'däsh)	spirited dance
DOBRY DEN (C)	(dō'bree dĕnn)	Good day
JEZIŠEK (S)	(Yĕ'zee-shĕk)	little Jesus
KAVARNA (C)	(kä'vär-nä)	coffee house
KDE AMERIKY (C)	(g'day Ä'měr-ĭ-kee)	Where is America?
KOLAČE (C)	(kō'lätch-ĕ)	a sweet cake
MALIČKA (C)	(mäl'ĭtch-kä)	little one
MAMIČKA (C)	(mä'meetch-kä)	little mother
MAMKA (C)	(mäm'kä)	little mother
OTECKO (C)	(ō'tĕts-kō)	father
PAN BOH (S)	(Pän Bŏh)	God
PERNÍČEK (S)	(pair'nee-chĕk)	a frosted cookie
PRIATEĽ (S)	(pree'ä tĕl)	friend (masculine)
POLIOVKA (S)	(pŏ'liŏv-kä)	soup
POMOC (C)	(pō'mōtz)	help
SEDLIAK (S)	(sĕd'lee-äk)	farmer
SLEČINKA (C)	(slĕtch'ĭn-kä)	little Miss
SLEČNA (C)	(slĕtch'nä)	Miss
SLÉT (C)	(slĕt)	flying of the falcons
SLIVOVIC (C)	(slĭ'vō-vĭtz)	a plum wine
SOKOL (C)	(Sō'kŏl)	Falcon—name of Slav gymnastic organization
SLOVENKA (S)	(Slō'vĕn-kä)	Slovak woman
STARÁ MAMA (S)	(stä'rä mä-má)	grandmother
STAROSTA (S)	(stär'ŏs-tä)	head man of a village
VESELÉ VELIKONOCE (C)	(Ve'sel-ĕ Vĕl'ee-kŏn-ŏt-sä)	Happy Easter!

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Russian Fairy Tales. R. NISBET BAIN. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. $2.50.

Old Peter's Russian Tales. ARTHUR RANSOME. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. $3.00.

The Russian Grandmother's Wonder Tales. LOUISE S. HOUGHTON. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. $1.75.

The Russian Garland. ROBERT STEFLE. F. A. Stokes Co., New York. $2.50.

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The Grandmother. BOŽENA NĚMCOVÁ. Translated by Frances Gregor. A. C. McClurg and Co., Chicago.

Hero Tales and Legends of the Serbians. WOISLAV PETROVITCH. F. A. Stokes Co., New York. $4.00.

Peasant Pioneers. An interpretation of the Slavic peoples in the United States. KENNETH D. MILLER. Council of Women for Home Missions and Missionary Education Movement, New York. Cloth, $1.00; paper, 60 cents.

Folk Songs of Many Peoples. Vol. I. FLORENCE HUDSON BOTSFORD. Womans Press, New York. $2.75.
Contains 145 folk songs of the Baltic, Balkan, and Slavic peoples.

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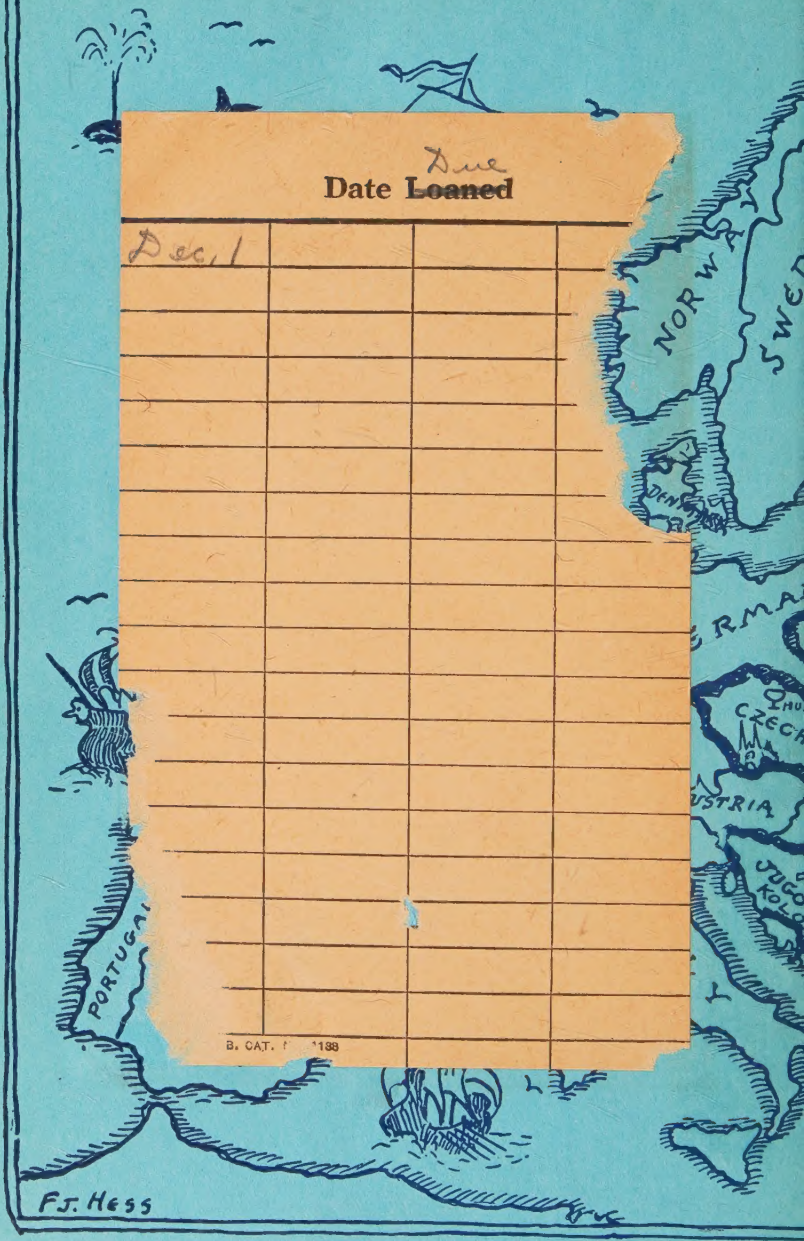
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